



Security Council

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Letter dated 25 February 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres; and Ms. Nisreen Elsaim, youth civil society representative and Chair of the United Nations Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, as well as the statements delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France; Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya; Mr. Kaïs Saïed, President of Tunisia; Ms. Kaja Kallas, Prime Minister of Estonia; Mr. Brigi Raffini, Prime Minister of the Niger; Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway; Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Viet Nam; Mr. Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense of Ireland; Mr. Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change of India; Mr. John F. Kerry, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate; Mr. Xie Zhenhua, China Special Envoy for Climate Change, as well as the statement delivered by the representative of the Russian Federation in connection with the video-teleconference on “Maintenance of international peace and security: Climate and security”, convened on Tuesday, 23 February 2021. Statements were also delivered by Their Excellencies Mr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of Malawi; Mr. Gaston Alphonso Browne, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda; and Mr. Heiko Maas, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for this video-teleconference, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are also enclosed: Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Indonesia, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tuvalu, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light



of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Barbara **Woodward**
President of the Security Council

Annex 1

Briefing by the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

I thank the United Kingdom presidency for convening this debate and for your invitation, Mr. President, to brief on a subject of grave concern.

The climate emergency is the defining issue of our time. The previous decade was the hottest in human history. Carbon dioxide levels are at record highs, and wildfires, cyclones, floods and droughts are the new normal. Those shocks not only damage the environment on which we depend; they also weaken our political, economic and social systems. The science is clear: we need to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C by the end of the century. Our duty is even clearer: we need to protect the people and communities who are being hit by climate disruption. We must step up preparations for the escalating implications of the climate crisis for international peace and security.

Climate disruption is a crisis amplifier and multiplier. Where climate change dries up rivers, reduces harvests, destroys critical infrastructure and displaces communities, it exacerbates the risks of instability and conflict. A study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute found that 8 of the 10 countries hosting the largest multilateral peace operations in 2018 were in areas highly exposed to climate change.

The impacts of the crisis are greatest where fragility and conflicts have weakened coping mechanisms, where people depend on natural capital, such as forests and fish stocks, for their livelihoods and where women — who bear the greatest burden of the climate emergency — do not enjoy equal rights. In Afghanistan, for example, where 40 per cent of the workforce is engaged in farming, reduced harvests push people into poverty and food insecurity, leaving them susceptible to recruitment by criminal gangs and armed groups. Across West Africa and the Sahel, more than 50 million people depend on rearing livestock for survival. Changes in grazing patterns have contributed to growing violence and conflict between pastoralists and farmers. In Darfur, low rainfall and recurrent droughts are increasing food insecurity and competition for resources and we are seeing the result. The consequences are particularly devastating for women and girls, who are forced to walk further to collect water, putting them at greater risk of sexual and gender-based violence.

Vulnerability to climate risks is also correlated with income inequality. In other words, the poorest suffer most. Unless we protect those most exposed and susceptible to climate-related impacts, we can expect them to become even more marginalized and their grievances to be reinforced. High levels of inequality, which climate change heightens, can weaken social cohesion and lead to discrimination, scapegoating, rising tensions and unrest, increasing the risk of conflict. Those who are already being left behind will be left even further behind.

Climate disruption is already driving displacement across the world. In some small island nations in the Pacific, entire communities have been forced to relocate, with terrible implications for their livelihoods, culture and heritage. The forced movement of larger numbers of people around the world will clearly increase the potential for conflict and insecurity beyond their suffering. When I was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, I spent time with people who had been uprooted by the impact of climate change in the Horn of Africa, Darfur, the Sahel and elsewhere. Listening to their stories, I understood the deep suffering and trauma of families forced to abandon homes and land that had been theirs for generations. Much more needs to be done to address the specific risks that the climate crisis poses to peace and security. I see four priority areas.

First, we need a greater focus on prevention through strong, ambitious climate action. We must get the world on track to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and prevent climate catastrophe. We must create a truly global coalition to commit to net-zero emissions by the middle of the century, and we must mobilize a decade of transformation through a successful twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow. That requires all Member States to present, well before November, ambitious nationally determined contributions with targets that will allow us to cut global emissions by 45 per cent by 2030 from 2010 levels. We are also asking all companies, cities and financial institutions to prepare concrete and credible decarbonization plans.

We still have a long way to go, and we look to the major emitters to lead by example in the coming months. That is a credibility test of their commitment to people and the planet. It is the only way that we will keep the goal of 1.5°C within reach.

Secondly, we need immediate actions to protect countries, communities and people from the increasingly frequent and severe climate impacts. We need a breakthrough on adaptation and resilience, which means dramatically raising the level of investments. All donors and multilateral and national development banks must increase the share of adaptation and resilience finance to at least 50 per cent of their climate finance support, and we must make those funds accessible to those on the front lines of the climate crisis. Developed countries must keep their pledge to channel \$100 billion annually to the Global South. They have already missed the deadline of 2020.

We need to scale up early warning systems and early action on climate-related crises, from droughts and storms to the emergence of zoonotic diseases. We also need stronger social protection to support those impacted. Those actions must start now with transformative policies as we emerge from the pandemic. Economic and financial systems must incorporate climate risk into financial analysis so that it is captured in business models and investment decisions. We must invest in renewable energy and green infrastructure. In short, we must close the finance gap by increasing support to the countries and communities that are suffering the worst impacts of the climate crisis. That support must reach women and girls, who bear the brunt of the climate crisis and constitute 80 per cent of those displaced by climate change.

Thirdly, we need to embrace a concept of security that puts people at its centre. The coronavirus disease pandemic has shown the devastation that so-called non-traditional security threats can cause on a global scale. Preventing and addressing the poverty, food insecurity and displacement caused by climate disruption contribute to sustaining peace and reducing the risk of conflict. The Nobel Peace Prize Committee recognized that when it awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to the World Food Programme last year.

Respect for human rights, particularly women's rights, the rule of law, inclusion and diversity are fundamental to solving the climate crisis and creating more peaceful and stable societies. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals are the global blueprint for action.

Fourthly, we need to deepen partnerships across and beyond the United Nations system. We must leverage and build on the strengths of different stakeholders, including the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, international financial institutions, regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia and others. The climate security mechanism, which brings together the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the United Nations Development

Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, is a blueprint for such collaboration within the United Nations system.

As we work to deliver those goals, the United Nations is striving to lead by example by making sure that its own operations take full account of the climate crisis. We are working to ensure that our mediation strategies, analysis and reporting, including to the Security Council, consistently reflect climate risks. In South Sudan, for example, an awareness of the impact of climate change helped our peacekeeping operation to mediate a local agreement on cattle management. In Yemen, the Peacebuilding Fund supported efforts to restore and strengthen local water governance structures, reducing intercommunal tensions. We are also reducing the United Nations environmental footprint, including through the increased use of renewable energy.

The climate crisis is the multilateral challenge of our age. It is already impacting every area of human activity. Solving it requires coordination and cooperation on a scale that we have never seen before. The engagement of all multilateral bodies, including the Security Council, can play an important role in dealing with the challenge. I urge Council members to use their influence during this pivotal year to ensure the success of COP26 and to mobilize others, including international financial institutions and the private sector, to do their part. I guarantee the full support of the United Nations for the British presidency of COP26, together with the Italian co-Chair. The year 2021 is a make-or-break one for collective action against the climate emergency.

Annex 2

Statement by the youth civil society representative and Chair of the United Nations Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, Nisreen Elsaim

Let me start by thanking the members of the Security Council for allowing me to speak on this important and crucial issue. I would also like to extend special thanks to the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council for the invitation.

The Security Council has held six debates specifically on climate security risks — in 2007 (see S/PV. 5663), 2011 (see S/PV.6587 and S/PV.6587 (Resumption 1)), 2018 (see S/PV.8307), 2019 (see S/PV.8451) and two in 2020 (see S/2020/751), one of which was informal. It has included references to climate security risks in resolutions related to Somalia, the Sudan, West Africa and the Sahel, Mali and the Lake Chad basin. Science has forecast that many more countries will join that list if we do not take the right measures now and if we do not start adaptation, particularly in Africa.

On 17 April 2007, the Security Council held a ground-breaking open debate at the ministerial level on the relationship between energy, security and climate (see S/PV.5663 and S/PV.5663 (Resumption 1)). In the same year, the eighth the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon described the conflict in Darfur as the first modern climate conflict.

Today, after almost 14 years, this agenda item is still valid and we are discussing climate security. For a Sudanese young person, everything regarding climate change cannot be affiliated with security. We are living in continuous insecurity due to many factors, which has put the Sudan at the top of the list when it comes to climate vulnerability. In 2018, the Security Council adopted resolution 2429 (2018), on the Sudan, which states:

“Recognising the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters, among other factors, on the situation in Darfur, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity” (*resolution 2429 (2018), twenty-first preambular paragraph*).

That paragraph and others describe it all. The survival of humankind in a situation of resource degradation, hunger, poverty and uncontrolled climate migration will make conflict an inevitable result.

Moreover, climate-related emergencies cause major disruptions in access to health and life-saving sexual and reproductive health services. Climate-related loss or changes of livelihood, as well as displacement and migration, increase the risk of gender-based violence and harmful practices. It is worth mentioning that women, young people and children are repeatedly impacted in those climate-insecure situations. Land and resources in Africa and many other parts of the world can no longer maintain young people because of climate change. Our search for a decent life, good and green jobs and proper access to services, as well as the new challenge of the coronavirus disease, means that the only solution for many will be migration — in-country, cross-border or internationally, legal or non-legal — exacerbating the risk of conflicts.

I very much welcome resolution 2524 (2020), on the new political mission, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, which, unlike military missions, can have a mandate on climate change and on the inclusion of young people. That is a historic opportunity to speak to the root causes of the conflict.

What I most welcome is the mentioning of climate change and youth participation twice in the resolution. What I appreciate more is the inclusion in the Juba Peace Agreement of the issue of climate change and environmental degradation in the Sudan and the Two Areas, which reflects a high awareness of the threats to the sustainability of peace.

Collecting data about conflict and climate change, consulting local communities and trusting in science will be my key recommendations for today.

As a young person, I am sure that young people are the solution. I urge Member States to give us more space, listen to us and engage young people. We are the present, and we own the future. Let us not repeat the lapse of previous generations. There should be no more doubts. We urge that Member States stop conflicts by stopping climate change, give us security and secure the future.

Annex 3

Statement by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Boris Johnson

For more than 75 years, the Security Council has been tasked with maintaining peace and security, and it has been difficult. We have not always agreed about how to achieve that goal. But one thing is absolutely clear to me: we are committed to tackling threats to our security and, as we have heard from the Secretary-General and from Nisreen Elsaim, climate change is a clear threat to our collective security and the security of our nations.

I know there are people around the world who will say this is all kind of “green stuff” from a bunch of tree-hugging tofu munchers and not suited to international diplomacy and international politics. I could not disagree more profoundly. We have to address the causes of climate change, but as Ms. Elsaim and the Secretary-General stated in their briefings, the effects are absolutely clear.

Think of the young man forced onto the road when his home becomes a desert, one of 16 million people every year displaced as a result of weather-related disasters — weather-related disasters that are associated with climate change. He goes to some camp, becomes prey for violent extremists — people who radicalize him — and the effects of that radicalization are felt around the world.

Think of the girl who drops out of school because her daily search for water takes her further and further from her family — and into the clutches of human traffickers and the international criminal gangs that profit from them.

Think of the farmer who has lost harvest after harvest to drought and then switches to poppies because poppies are a hardier crop, with the impacts that the opium crops have, quite frankly, on the streets of all our cities.

Think of the impoverished and fragile nation whose Government collapses when critical infrastructure is overwhelmed by increasingly frequent extreme weather of a kind that sends shockwaves of instability around the world.

Now, if that kind of result, in terms of political, economic and humanitarian impacts, were being triggered by a despotic warlord or a civil war, then nobody would question the right and the duty of the Security Council to act. That is why this is not a subject we can shy away from.

By the way, this issue is not, like so many of the issues that the Secretary-General confronts, some bafflingly complex diplomatic minuet. It is not some modern equivalent of the Schleswig-Holstein question. Can you remember the answer to the Schleswig-Holstein question, Mr. Secretary-General? I bet he can.

People know the answer to climate change, and they know how to tackle this crisis. As Bill Gates put it in his new book, what we have to do is go from 51 billion tons of greenhouse-gas emissions each year to net zero, so the increase in global temperatures remains at manageable levels. And as we do so, we must support the most vulnerable and fragile nations that are feeling the effects of climate change. We must help them to adapt and build resilience.

And that is what we are doing. In 2019, we passed a law committing us, the United Kingdom, to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and we have pledged to slash emissions by 68 per cent by 2030. That is the steepest reduction for any major economy. Our climate finance commitments for the next five years, designed to support the rest of the world in achieving this goal, stand at £11.6 billion. Ahead of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, we are going to be putting climate change firmly at the top of the agenda for our Group of Seven presidency as well.

My message to the Security Council today is that the Council must act now too because climate change is a geopolitical issue every bit as much as it is an environmental one. If the Council is going to succeed in maintaining peace and security worldwide then it has to galvanize the whole range of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes into a swift and effective response.

This is my question: if we do not act now, when will we act?

When are we going to do something if we do not act now? Will we act when changing sea levels affect navigation around our coasts? Will we act when, as Ms. Elsaim said, when huddled masses have to flee drought or wildfire, or when conflict over resources arrives at our borders?

Whether we like it or not, it is a matter of when, not if, our countries and our peoples will have to deal with the security impacts of climate change. Let us therefore do what the Security Council was created to do and show the kind of global leadership that is needed to protect the peace, security and stability of our nations, of our regions and of our world.

Annex 4**Statement by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron**

[Original: English and French]

I would like to begin by thanking Prime Minister Boris Johnson and the United Kingdom for organizing, together with the Secretary-General, today's meeting and for hosting us in Glasgow this year for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference. I think that we are all aware of the importance of this agenda, at a time when, in a few weeks, on 22 April, the United States of America will be holding an important summit. I would like now to salute John Kerry, whom I see on the screen and who was at the forefront of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and who, if I may say so, has been a "Resistance fighter" over the last four years. We are all happy to see the United States of America back at the table.

I have three very simple messages to share with the online participants in today's meeting, which are in accordance with everything that has just been said.

First, over the past few years, we have very clearly established that the fight against climate change and in favour of the protection of the environment is in and of itself a peace and security issue. I will not review the whole agenda that came out of the Paris Agreement or what we will no doubt be discussing virtually on 22 April and again in Glasgow, or what our objectives are with regard to current and future generations. But, to be very clear, the link between climate and security, while complex, cannot be denied. It is in a way inexorable and beyond even what can be put in writing.

Out of the 20 countries most affected by conflict in the world, 12 are also among the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In the Pacific, absent resolute actions to adapt, the inhabitants of some islands will have no other choice but to leave their lands. Further, we have learned in recent years how the impact of desertification and the diminution of fish stocks and opportunities to plant stable crops can lead to conflict.

The Lake Chad Basin region, which has been subject to migration, is a clear example of this; indeed, a large part of the conflict, beyond the Islamic terrorist factor, has been fuelled by migrations forced by climate change. The same is true with the success of Boko Haram in the region and the change of use of certain lands in north-eastern Nigeria. We are therefore very clearly seeing in these areas the consequences for insecurity — and, in a way, for the emergence of new conflicts — of a climate agenda that has gotten out of control. We can also observe the consequences of climate change on the displaced persons/refugee/migration agenda, to which we know Secretary-General António Guterres is deeply attached.

The number of climate refugees is growing. Climate refugees are now becoming the primary targets of the pandemic and the food crisis, and we can see to some extent how all these agendas feed each other. To be clear, failure on the climate front would undermine conflict-prevention and peacebuilding efforts. That is why I fully support the initiative to address these issues at the level of the Security Council as part of its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The Council's action must be guided by the need to mitigate the effects of climate change on populations and the consequences on how conflicts evolve. This can be done within the framework of effective multilateral climate diplomacy and with the range of tools at our disposal. After an extreme climatic event, emergency humanitarian measures will be needed to save lives, ensure security and provide the means for sustainable reconstruction. In other cases, we will have to help communities adapt to inevitable sea level rise and soil degradation.

We will also have to be forward looking, for example by providing small producers with insurance mechanisms to enable them to restart economic activity after a disaster. We therefore can see that this agenda needs to be structured; it is an agenda of prevention and effectiveness, which justifies, on the one hand, referral to the Security Council and, on the other hand, support for appointing a special envoy for climate security to coordinate all these efforts. I see only the upside in having the Secretary-General report on an annual basis to the Security Council on the impact of climate on international security in order to foresee issues, make warnings and draft recommendations, so that we are enabled to play our role.

Secondly, given the growing role of climate as a threat multiplier, we — each and every one of us — must act effectively and assume our responsibilities, especially in the three regions that seem to me to be particularly vulnerable and where the multilateral agenda must be coordinated with the regional agenda to take a form that is clearly better adapted. We know that the consequences of climate change are unfairly distributed — a fact that we must obviously take into account when making our commitments. A month ago, I called for an increase in France's share of climate financing for adaptation. France will now allocate €2 billion per year, or a third of its climate financing, to adaptation. Action must be particularly focused in several areas.

Primary focus must be given to Africa. Clearly, it is in Africa, as the two examples I mentioned earlier have shown, that some of the most glaring consequences of this climate-security link can be seen. On 11 January, at the One Planet Summit for Biodiversity, we launched an accelerator for the Great Green Wall, which is an initiative that existed for more than 10 years now and brings together 11 States of the Sahel — let me take this opportunity to greet all of my friends from the Sahel whom I see participating today — with the goal of restoring 100 million hectares of land for farming, creating 10 million jobs and sequestering 250 million tons of carbon. This would be a remarkable contribution by Africa to the fight against global warming.

To this end, we have decided to reinvest and ensure good governance. Given what the countries of the Sahel have been going through in the face of the terrorist threat — of this we are well aware — our efforts to accelerate our responses for biodiversity and against global warming in the region are a very concrete instrument in the fight for climate and peace, which are completely linked.

It is also exactly the same mindset in Africa that has driven all the initiatives that have been carried out to protect the rainforest. I see the Prime Minister of Norway among the participants in today's meeting. She, alongside Chancellor Merkel, has played a key role in this initiative, which must continue to inspire us. I think that it is exactly this mindset that we must form and build. Accordingly, increased dialogue between the African Union and the United Nations would be extremely conducive to better structuring these instruments and framing this debate.

It is this exact methodology that, in my view, should be adopted for the Indo-Pacific region. Today, in the Indo-Pacific region, or better, the Pacific-Oceania region, there are a large number of vulnerable States. We know that many of these nation States will have great difficulty adapting if we do not alter the course of global warming and climate disruption. The answers that are provided are the conditions for peace and stability in the region as a whole, and they must issue from a multilateral framework; otherwise, climate disturbances and anxiety will worsen the current geopolitical situation and become the instruments of climate-adaptation diplomacy that will trigger wars in the coming years, by proposing population redistribution and other adjustments by one or other large sovereign State in the region.

Thirdly, the agenda in the Arctic will become a major issue in the next few years. It will be both a climatic and geopolitical issue, bringing together responses

needed for prevention of and assistance in the global warming that is currently at work and which are designed to help avoid emerging geopolitical tensions in this region. I focus on these three regions as they are very specific theatres for greater involvement by the international community and where the United Nations and a multilateral agenda are needed to avoid new conflicts.

Finally, the battle against the scourges of the twenty-first century must also give rise to renewed unity in the Security Council. The coronavirus disease pandemic has shown that we can achieve reconciliation around global health, biodiversity and the fight against climate change. I believe that the same is true when peace and security issues are added to the mix. We are increasingly bringing these agendas together with a view to protecting human beings, and we are also creating the ways and means needed to rebuild effective multilateralism. This approach is a necessity for Council members, permanent and non-permanent alike, if we are to cooperate on this concrete agenda in the coming years. At stake are not just regional conflicts that we could accept to see deteriorate, although I think such deterioration is in fact unacceptable, but our health, our lives and the stability of our planet.

These are the three remarks that I wanted to share with you with one conviction, which is that the role of the United Nations and the Security Council, on this particular issue, is undoubtedly even more important today than it was yesterday, and that we are facing a race against time that is actually bringing these agendas closer together. And I just wanted to tell you that France, at your side, will be fully committed to this effort.

Annex 5

Statement by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta

Let me begin by congratulating you on your continued stewardship of the Security Council for the month of February 2021.

I welcome this high-level debate, as our understanding of climate change continues to reveal its role as a multiplier of existing threats to international peace and security.

The international community has responded elsewhere to the threat of climate change with ambitious solutions that are transforming economic development through investment that seeks to minimize environmental, social and governance harms. We must do more to ensure that these new approaches to investment by the public and private sector reach the countries and regions worst hit by climate change. As a start, we can recognize that persistent droughts, constant sea-level rise and increasingly frequent extreme weather patterns are reversing economic growth and development gains achieved over decades. The result is increased fragility to instability and armed conflict, which then come to the attention of the Security Council.

The implementation of the Council's mandate to maintain global peace and security will only get more difficult with time if climate change remains on its present course. Rather than wait for a future tipping point, we must redouble the efforts to direct all the resources and multilateral frameworks of our rules-based international order to mitigate the effects of climate change.

While the bulk of this work is happening outside the Security Council, as it should, no body with such a strong mandate should step aside from this challenge. That is why one of our priorities as Kenya, during our term on the Security Council, is to clarify the importance of the climate and security nexus. This nexus is already impacting Africa, whose files dominate the Council's agenda. Listen to us Africans when we tell you that the link is clear, its impact tangible and the need for solutions urgent.

Africa unfortunately will suffer the worst consequences of climate change, despite being the least responsible for global greenhouse-gas emissions. Projected climatic changes for Africa suggest a future of increasing water scarcity, decreasing agricultural yields, encroaching desert and damaged coastal infrastructure.

Examples of the consequences abound. The drought-stricken Horn of Africa, the drying up Lake Chad basin and the shrinking Sahel and savannah grasslands have worsened economic vulnerabilities and set in motion political, demographic and migratory dynamics that increase the threat of insurgency and violent extremism.

I hope that the Security Council will listen more carefully — and respond — to the new, innovative tools for climate-related conflict-prevention and resilience-building that can emerge from the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Environment Programme. I strongly urge these bodies to link early-warning systems that map climate change hotspots to decision-making tools that enable conflict prevention at the national, regional and international levels.

Such tools include the building of dynamic and accessible modelling at the national and regional levels that allow Governments and the multilateral and private sectors to deploy solutions in a security-conscious, forward-looking manner. For such innovative work to have policy impact, it will require democratized access

to critical data and much more data-sharing with African institutions, engineers and researchers.

Allow me to finish with two recommendations that can be immediately acted on by the Security Council.

In crafting mandates for conflict resolution and post-conflict resolution, we can do more to ensure they dovetail with the efforts to deploy climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. In this regard, I applaud resolution 2349 (2017), on Lake Chad, and resolution 2502 (2019), on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which have integrated measures to address the impact of climate change.

Fragile countries experiencing armed conflict, or the threat of it, receive little public or private investment. The lack of employment and opportunity, in turn, worsens the political and security crisis. The Council and the relevant United Nations and international financial institutions that respond to its resolutions can help alleviate this challenge by aligning conflict resolution, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid and post-conflict reconstruction with job creation by the domestic private sector.

Another important and prompt action that the Council can take to boost peace and security in the most fragile regions in Africa is to act strongly against illicit financial outflows, illicit resource exploitation, terrorism financing and money laundering. Doing so immediately boosts the resources available to Governments to undertake climate change mitigation and offer the public services and goods needed to consolidate and protect peace. It also disrupts the negative forces that worsen the threat of climate change by making it tougher to tackle its security impact.

In conclusion, let me affirm that Kenya will remain a strong voice for Africa and the Global South, including small island developing States, in making the case for the climate change and security nexus. The world expects results and is looking to the Security Council to ever-more effectively fulfil its mandate. A growing part of that work is likely to involve the conflict impacts of climate change.

Once again, I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation, and I thank all members for their kind attention.

Annex 6

Statement by the President of Tunisia, Kaïs Saïed

[Original: Arabic]

I would like to begin by emphasizing a point that a number of speakers, in particular Ms. Elsaim, have made during today's debate — young people are indeed the present and the future, and the whole world should therefore listen to them. In addition, as you know, the familiar, conventional concept of security has been replaced, as the Secretary-General said, by a concept of security that puts people at its centre. We also put people, rather than money, at the centre.

At the outset, I would like to thank you sincerely, and to thank the United Kingdom for choosing to devote today's meeting to addressing the many multifaceted climate-change-related risks that threaten international peace and security. The Republic of Tunisia gives the highest priority to this matter through its current membership of the Security Council and through other international and regional bodies.

I also thank his Excellency the Secretary-General for his valuable briefing. We sincerely appreciate his efforts and support the priorities he has set for 2021, in particular the drive for Member States to prevent climate change and mobilize the support needed to counter its many effects on peace and security in their broadest sense.

I also thank the other participants for their contributions and for the ideas they have put forward in this debate on the critical issues facing all humanity.

It is paradoxical that humankind, the main victim of climate change, is also primarily responsible for that change, and for increasing its scope. There is still hope that climate change can be curbed and its effects mitigated, if everyone believes in the value of collective action and a unified response to common threats. None of us, regardless of our position, has the right to kill ourselves and, at the same time, murder all humankind.

When the initiative that resulted from the adoption of resolution 2532 (2020) was introduced, it was emphasized that the imminent threats to international peace and security were no longer limited to the conventional threats arising from war and conflict, but included serious new challenges, such as epidemics, poverty and vulnerability, that were no less dangerous. If epidemics and armed conflicts are threats, climate change in turn represents a threat that is no less serious than the familiar, well-known dangers.

Climate change, which deepens poverty among vulnerable groups and threatens food and water security in many regions of the world, particularly in Africa, could damage States' economic and social potential and limit their ability to control and address the serious consequences of such problems. Today's dramatic environmental situation is a warning of things to come in an increasing number of regions around the world, with the aggravation of climate vulnerability and its role in deepening crises, prolonging armed conflicts, creating a climate of marginalization and exclusion, spreading terrorist organizations, violent extremism and organized crime, and contributing to illegal migration and conflicts over food and water sources.

Given this delicate situation, we once again call on the Council to establish a new approach in order to address the causes of these environmental threats comprehensively before addressing their consequences. We also call for the material support needed in order for specialized United Nations, international and regional

bodies to play their role in addressing these threats by developing their analytical and evaluation capabilities, and in addressing avoidable risks by establishing early-warning mechanisms and fine-tuning effective prevention strategies.

Many natural and health disasters, most recently the coronavirus disease pandemic, which has spared no one, have once again emphasized the importance of strengthening international solidarity among our peoples and the need to consider rebuilding our economic, financial, social and health systems to take into account nature's needs and reduce climate impacts and toxic gas emissions. This is a responsibility that is shared by all. It is shared by all nations, in the North and the South, but it varies in accordance with each party's responsibility for causing climate change. Measures to combat climate change must be taken not unilaterally but by everyone, and not at the expense of developing countries and their legitimate right to development, prosperity and growth.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Tunisia has made a commitment to tackling environmental issues by including climate change as a national priority in the text of its constitution. We reaffirm our country's commitment to international action to address these emerging threats to international peace and security, and we affirm our steadfast determination to pursue efforts to advance the Council's work in this area.

We will strive for the United Nations to be truly united, so that humanity does not put itself in danger in search of a profit that will disappear when human rights are forgotten or, indeed, gradually smothered by the spread of gases and their associated toxins. When that time comes, the gases will spare no one.

Annex 7

Statement by the Prime Minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas

Let me start by thanking the United Kingdom for convening this meeting at such a high level. I hope that the world does not need any more convincing that climate change poses a real threat, including to our shared security. But the world surely needs leaders to shape concrete actions, plans and targets and carry them through in order to fight climate change.

We warmly welcome the United States back to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and stand ready to cooperate in every possible way in this field.

I am proud to say that the European Union is leading the way. Our commitment to reaching climate neutrality by 2050 will soon be written into law, and our every step will be geared towards meeting this goal. By 2050 we aim to achieve climate neutrality as a national target as well.

Although critically important, this was not an easy decision to make — not least for Estonia, where energy production has traditionally relied on our national resource, oil shale, which is a fossil fuel. However, my Government is firmly committed to contributing to global efforts. We have established a clear timeline for phasing out oil shale by 2040.

The overlap between climate and security challenges was made painfully clear during a public discussion of the Security Council last July (see S/2020/751). Seven out of the 10 countries most vulnerable, and least prepared, to deal with climate change host a United Nations peacekeeping operation or a special political mission. The Member States of the Security Council cannot ignore this nexus between climate and security any longer. Today the German Foreign Minister will present proposals by like-minded countries for the way forward in the Security Council. We fully support his message.

We need to acknowledge that the climate emergency can pose a danger to peace. And we must make it a part of our security policy planning and discussions here. The Security Council must do more to fully understand climate-related security risks and integrate this knowledge into all aspects of its work. The Secretary-General needs to receive a mandate to collect data and coordinate policy to this aim.

As always, we must not lose sight of the most vulnerable. We know how women and children suffer in conflicts. But research confirms that women and girls are also disproportionately affected by climate change. We must help empower women. We must direct resources to local women's groups at the front lines of climate change. We must recognize that women have an equal right to access, use and control land and resources. This is the way to build resilient communities not only for women, but also for everyone.

Estonia has chosen to cooperate with some small islands and least developed countries in green technology solutions and know-how transfer. We have supported adaptation and emergency communication systems in the Pacific region, drinking water monitoring systems in the Grenada Island river basin and the development of solar energy solutions for rural areas in Myanmar. But in addition to individual projects, we need joint actions at a global level.

The coronavirus disease crisis has taught us that emergencies do not respect borders. However, borders are quick to close, even for data. For an effective policy, we need more than just correct data; we also need to be able to share it and use it. This means that data needs to be globally comparable, accessible and interoperable. And we need political leadership.

That is why Estonia recently launched a new cooperation initiative. We are proposing the Data for the Environment Alliance — the DEAL. The DEAL will be a coalition of State and non-State actors that will support the United Nations Environment Programme in developing a global environmental data strategy by 2025. It also aims to improve national data-management capacities across the globe. I hope that everyone, including the Council, can see the value of high-standard modern data management. I thank all those who have already shown interest.

There is no doubt that climate change is making the world a more dangerous place. Who other than the Security Council needs to pay due attention to that and build momentum before the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change?

Annex 8
Statement by the Prime Minister of the Niger, Brigi Rafini

[Original: French]

I have the honour to address this high-level debate of the Security Council on behalf of the President of the Republic of the Niger, His Excellency Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, who unfortunately could not join Council members for reasons of scheduling. He therefore asked me to convey to the Security Council his support and his wishes for the success of this high-level debate. I would now like to deliver the statement that he wished to share with the Council.

“First of all, let me commend the United Kingdom for its commitment to keeping the issue of security risks related to climate change on the Security Council’s agenda. I would also like to thank Mr. António Guterres, as well as Ms. Nisreen Elsaim, for their briefings and their strong commitment to ensuring that the impact of climate change on peace and security issues is taken into account.

“As the Secretary-General and other speakers so aptly pointed out, the impact of climate change on peace and security is increasingly evident. It is now undeniable that climate events are reversing the course of development in several regions of the world, exacerbating humanitarian and security crises.

“According to a recent World Bank study, water scarcity, exacerbated by climate change, could affect economies and lead some regions of the world, such as the Sahel, to experience a decline in gross domestic product of as much as 6 per cent, spur massive population migration and spark conflicts.

“In addition, climate change could increase hunger and malnutrition by 20 per cent by 2050 and deepen poverty, particularly for the 2.5 billion small-scale producers whose livelihoods depend on the climate and its impact on their production conditions. In the Sahel, for example, a focus of that reality, climate change has intensified competition over the already dwindling land, grazing and water resources, fuelling tensions between herders and farmers and hampering peacebuilding and development efforts in the region.

“My first message is about our collective responsibility to address that existential challenge so as to achieve a paradigm shift. Climate change and land degradation are no longer just an environmental issue but are now part of a broader vision that closely links environmental targets to economic and social development goals and therefore our common goal of global peace, stability and security.

“Just as we did with the coronavirus disease pandemic, we must see climate change as a threat to peace and security, and that must not be divisive. We must work together even harder to translate our knowledge and policies into concrete action. It is therefore important to understand the causes, effects and complexity of climate change in order to be able to combat them, since our objective is not only to manage conflicts; we also have a fundamental responsibility to prevent them.

“Against that background, my second message is a call to action through an integrated and coordinated approach. In the context of United Nations and Security Council efforts, increased investment in prevention and preparedness actions in fragile States could limit the compounded humanitarian consequences of climate change and armed conflict.

“In that regard, we call for the strengthening of the Security Council’s capacity to understand the security impact of climate change through

the issuance of a regular report of the Secretary-General that includes a thorough analysis of the current and future risks, as well as action-oriented recommendations. I also call for the consistent consideration of such risks in resolutions relating to country-specific and regional contexts and situations, as that could increase the effectiveness of peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts.

“In that respect, I would like to encourage the Security Council to draw, as far as possible, on the advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as on the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security, co-chaired by the Niger and Ireland. Those frameworks, together with the data provided to us by research institutes, allow us to gain insight into national and regional processes, which are all tools to better inform the Security Council about the implications of climate change for peace and security. Furthermore, the appointment of a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for climate and security seems to us to be timely, as it will enhance the visibility and effectiveness of the consideration of that dimension in the Council’s actions.

“The effects of climate change know no borders. We therefore share the responsibility to manage them collectively in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Without better adaptation and resilience-building strategies dedicated to responsibly managing and restoring our natural assets, climate change in West Africa and the Sahel will continue to be a major risk factor, threatening rural livelihoods, causing forced migration and exacerbating conflicts over increasingly limited natural resources.

“My third message concerns the importance of changing perceptions of the regions most affected by climate-related security risks, particularly the Sahel. Too often, the narratives and discourses about such areas are limited to challenges and vulnerabilities. They ignore the opportunities and potential of those regions in terms of natural, demographic and cultural assets.

“We have the capacity to capitalize on such opportunities through technological innovation and sustainable job creation, particularly in key sectors such as energy and agriculture. The limited energy infrastructure, the distribution of the population over a very large area and the arid climate, which were once seen as disadvantages, are now an asset not only for the region but for Africa as a whole.

“That vision can be realized if it is supported by a strong commitment and political will. For that reason, in Africa, particularly in the Sahel region, great hope has been placed in the entry into force of the Paris Agreement. Among other things, the Agreement led to a flagship initiative in Africa, adopted at the Africa Action Summit for Continental Co-emergence on climate, held in Morocco on the sidelines of twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, namely, the establishment of three climate commissions for Africa, including the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region, which comprises 17 countries and which I have the honour to chair.

“In order to become operational, the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region adopted a climate investment plan at a total amount of approximately \$440 billion in order to contribute to the global effort to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and increase the adaptation and resilience capacities of the Sahelian populations. To fund it, it was the subject of a round table and a high-level consultative meeting held in New York on 22 September 2019, which I chaired and which was attended by high-level officials, including the Secretary-General.

“In conclusion, on behalf of the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region, I would like to call on every State party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to fully play its part in its roles and responsibilities in order to successfully reverse the course of climate change together. There is still a long way to go and the consequences of climate inaction are even more devastating for current and future generations. United, we must move forward with our eyes open.”

Annex 9

Statement by the Prime Minister of Norway, Erna Solberg

I thank the United Kingdom for placing this issue on the Security Council's agenda. I also thank the briefers for setting the stage. The year 2020 was the hottest year on record. Heat waves, wildfires and floods affected the lives of millions. There are 270 million people living with acute food insecurity. Climate shocks are a key driver. In the Sahel, climate change affects ecosystems and livelihoods. Increased competition over scarce resources fuels conflicts.

In Somalia and the Lake Chad basin, climate impacts have enabled armed groups to boost recruitment. In the Horn of Africa and in the Middle East, climate change escalates the risk of conflict. Ocean warming, illegal fishing and sea level rise threaten the coastal and small island nations. Like the farmers in the Sahel, fishermen in the Pacific therefore find it difficult to maintain their livelihoods.

The biodiversity crisis and deforestation affect the security of many. They are closely interlinked with climate change and can hamper peace and development. We risk a negative spiral: climate change undermines the ability to cope with conflict and conflict undermines resilience to climate change.

Climate change is redefining the global security landscape. But there is no single solution — we must adapt our response to different contexts. Climate change is expected to displace more than 140 million people by 2050. Twelve of the 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change are also dealing with violent conflict. We must rethink and adapt the Security Council's approaches to peacebuilding and sustaining peace in three ways.

First, the Security Council needs better information on climate-related security risks. In that regard, international research networks and the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security will be important. To support our work, Norway has engaged the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute to establish a Nordic-Baltic expert network.

We fully support the work of the climate security mechanism. I echo the call for regular reports by the Secretary-General to the Security Council. A special representative on climate and security should also be appointed.

Climate risks must be considered in all prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. That goes for the Security Council, but also for Member States, the Secretariat and the leadership of United Nations operations.

Secondly, the Security Council should discuss climate risks in country-specific contexts, based on country reporting and briefings. The United Nations must be at the forefront of preventive diplomacy. To achieve sustainable solutions, our peace diplomacy must be climate-sensitive and our climate action must be conflict-sensitive.

Thirdly, we must strengthen our partnerships within and beyond the United Nations system. We must partner closely with affected States and regional organizations and ensure the active participation of diverse groups, including women and young people.

The national security communities in many countries have understood the security risks posed by climate change. While climate change can lead to hard security challenges, there are no hard security solutions. Our first line of defence is ambitious climate action. It must begin with the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Climate action depends on multilateral cooperation. We must invest in the ability of communities to

adapt and respond to climate shocks and crises. That will reduce risks and, in turn, break the cycle of short-term responses, shifting to sustainable solutions.

We have a common responsibility to counter climate change and maintain peace and security, especially for the coming generations. I firmly believe that the Security Council will play an important role in those efforts. By doing so, the Council will be better prepared to maintain international peace and stability.

Annex 10

Statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends the United Kingdom for this opportunity to address climate-related security risks. We applaud its continued dedication and leadership in this matter, particularly ahead of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). I also thank the briefers for their insightful remarks on this vital subject.

As the primary organ for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council has a responsibility to address the consequences of climate change, in line with its mandate. Failure to tackle the debilitating impacts through the lens of peace and security means, in part, an abdication of our duty. As such, it is time for the Council to seriously consider a draft resolution on the matter and to map out a coherent approach, aiming for a working consensus.

We reaffirm that the UNFCCC is the primary body dealing with climate change and the Paris Agreement is a major component of our rules-based international system. At the same time, we recognize that the Security Council has a role to play without encroaching on the work of the inclusive decision-making body of the UNFCCC. Similarly, we must engage with the Peacebuilding Commission and the General Assembly in order to effectively address climate and security risks across the joinder of issues touching and concerning humanitarian support, sustainable development, health pandemics, peace and security.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reiterates that the first step to prevent or contain climate-security risks is for the major, and historical, emitters to fulfil, and indeed exceed, the commitments made in the Paris Agreement. Global action must be accelerated to keep temperatures below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, in line with our common but differentiated responsibilities. Indeed, we have, gathered around this virtual table, those who can have the greatest impact on preventing climate-fuelled conflict by rationally and comprehensively reducing emissions and by upholding financial commitments towards adaptation measures, separate and apart from already agreed official development aid obligations.

Climate change is an existential challenge to us all but it continues to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable among us, including small islands and conflict-affected countries. As a small island developing State, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines knows all too well the impact of increasingly intense climatic shocks due to unique vulnerabilities and structural fragilities. In our Caribbean region, it has become distressingly commonplace for an entire year's gross domestic product to be washed away by a hurricane overnight, even as we are hindered by a lack of sufficient access, on favourable terms, to the global financial architecture. Our fellow islanders in low-lying States are faced with a clear and present existential threat that poses significant concerns for their sovereignty and, by extension, international peace. We stand in solidarity with conflict-affected countries where climate change exacerbates food insecurity and humanitarian crises, stokes conflicts over resources, fans the flames of political turmoil and creates significant socioeconomic challenges.

Our sister island Haiti is among the most susceptible to the impacts of increasingly intense and frequent climatic hazards. These natural disasters hit Haiti hard, partly due to the felling of its forests, the misuse and abuse of woodland resources and the obligations they have to pay externally imposed debts. Another awful example is the Sahel: we will not see an end to the complex cycles of conflict

without striking at the heart of the battle for dwindling resources amidst climate change and drought.

It is evident that among the major contemporary drivers of global insecurity is the bundle of issues arising from the impacts of climate change. No country escapes the consequences attendant thereto.

There are solutions to these man-made crises. In order to effectively address these complex situations, we must integrate climate perspectives into the Council's work. To this end, we support enhanced reporting by the Secretary-General on the relevant issues and decision-making on the basis of climate-risk data; the appointment of a special envoy on climate and security; further training of United Nations personnel to deal with the security implications of climate change; and the incorporation of climate advisers in peacekeeping missions.

In crafting its mandates, the Security Council should also pay close attention to what the Governments of conflict-affected States outline as their principal climate-security challenges and approaches, including in their nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans. Further, the recent establishment of an Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security comprised of Security Council members is a promising development of which Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is proud to be a part.

It is time for the Security Council to rise to the extant challenges associated with climate-related security risks in this seventy-sixth year of the United Nations. Climate change has rendered obsolete the traditional approaches to managing conflicts. Today, the Charter of the United Nations — and the future of all humankind — demand more of us.

Annex 11

Statement by the Prime Minister of Viet Nam, Nguyen Xuan Phuc

I applaud the initiative of the Government of the United Kingdom and of the President of the Security Council to host today's important Council open debate on addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security. I would like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and the Chair of the United Nations Youth Advisory Group, Ms. Nisreen Elsaim, for their insightful and substantive briefings and recommendations.

Earth — our blue planet, and our shared home — is suffering from the grievous impacts of climate change. The year 2020 was one of the three hottest years in modern history, which resulted in constant severe consequences, including floods, droughts, bushfires, rising sea levels, and the unprecedented outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Such calamities have placed great burdens on the political and socioeconomic life of many countries. They have triggered unemployment and poverty, affected the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people, and risked creating instabilities or exacerbating current conflicts in many countries and regions, thereby threatening international peace and security. In addition, conflicts and instabilities could further erode countries' resilience and rob them of valuable resources that might be utilized to overcome the challenges of climate change.

I therefore propose that the Security Council, with its paramount mission of maintaining international peace and security, needs to galvanize collective and persistent efforts of the international community through the following measures.

First, a comprehensive and balanced approach is necessary in handling the links between traditional and non-traditional security challenges, particularly in addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as poverty, inequality, power politics, unilateral interference and coercion. Strict adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and international law must truly become a standard of behaviour for countries in international relations.

Secondly, for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to be effectively implemented, the Security Council and the international community should allocate greater resources to supporting developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing States, and land-locked countries, which are most detrimentally affected by climate change and are also lacking expertise and resources.

Thirdly, I hope that the Security Council will continue to enhance its early-warning capacity and bolster its role in mediating, preventing and resolving conflicts in all regions, including through enhancing cooperation with regional organizations.

Fourthly, in order to harmoniously manage the link between climate change and security, it is necessary to continue upholding the principles of respect for the sovereignty, national ownership and principal responsibilities of States. The shared interests of communities and peoples, particularly vulnerable groups, must be placed at the heart of all national and global climate action strategies and plans.

According to the World Bank, Viet Nam is among the six countries most severely affected by climate change. Accordingly, the Vietnamese Government has undertaken an active and effective response to climate change, demonstrating strong political resolve and establishing major guidelines. Viet Nam has made great efforts to fulfil its international commitments on climate change through the 2030 Agenda

and the Paris Agreement. In this regard, we support all endeavours to address climate-related challenges in the Security Council and other multilateral forums.

I hope that the international community will provide Viet Nam with further assistance and resources, so that we can better live up to our commitments. Viet Nam will work closely with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and support cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations.

The world is burdened by the fight against COVID-19. Responding to the appeal of the Secretary-General to make peace with nature as the defining task of the twenty-first century, we should take bold actions and enhance international unity. I am confident that the challenges stemming from climate change can be transformed into drivers for change, contributing to fostering a future of peace and more sustainable development for the next generations.

Annex 12

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense of Ireland, Simon Coveney

I thank the President. Let me start by congratulating him, and the United Kingdom, on his country's presidency of the Security Council, and for hosting this very important debate at such a high level. I would like also to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his remarks and his leadership on this issue, and, of course, I want to thank the briefer, Ms. Nisreen Elsaim, for her important briefing.

Through a lifetime's work, David Attenborough brought into our homes the wonder, but also the vulnerability, of our planet's rich biodiversity — a common heritage — and we owe it to future generations to protect and preserve it. Climate change is the defining challenge of our generation. Unaddressed, this challenge will affect every part of our planet. No aspect of our societies will be untouched. We need urgent and collective action by all pillars of the multilateral system, including the Security Council, if we are to meet this challenge.

How we respond today will determine our shared future tomorrow, and we all have a role to play. Ireland, along with the rest of the European Union, will not be found wanting. Ireland will transition to a net-zero economy by 2050. Like all other countries, Ireland is already feeling the impacts of climate change, and it is taking mitigation actions. But these actions alone will not safeguard our future, and we know that.

As Prime Minister Johnson has said, we must scale up our investments in adaptation and resilience efforts if we are to protect the poorest and most vulnerable from the effects of climate change, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.

Countries with means, like Ireland, have a responsibility to act first. In so doing, we must consider the quality of our climate finance as we work to increase its quantity. In this regard, in the lead-up to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and beyond, we must listen to and be guided by the voices of those most affected by climate change, particularly those in least developed countries and in small island developing States.

But we must also go beyond listening and promote the critical role of these countries in decision-making processes on climate. In this vein, we have been pleased to work closely with the United Kingdom on the adaptation and resilience agenda through the Least Developed Countries Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience Initiative. This initiative, led by Least Developed Countries, aims to sustainably increase the proportion of climate finance that reaches the local level for vital adaptation activities, from an estimated 10 per cent today to 70 per cent by 2030.

Urgent action is needed to combat the effects of climate change on our environment, and on our complex global ecosystem. We look forward to the COP26 negotiations in Glasgow later this year, where we hope real progress can be made, building on the achievements of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Climate change has many complex impacts, not least on international peace and security, which is the very business of the Security Council. This is the core of our debate today. It is clear that climate change is already causing upheaval, affecting people and security and the stability of societies across the world. This is the testimony we hear daily from around the world — from small island States, from African partners, from regions affected by devastating forest fires or floods.

In the Sahel, particularly in the countries around Lake Chad, we have seen how conflict and climate combine to diminish the availability of, and access to, natural resources. This amplifies tensions between farmers and others, which in turn triggers violence. Across the Horn of Africa, the multiple and repeated shocks of drought and flooding undermine community resilience and livelihoods, creating drivers that armed groups exploit for influence and recruitment.

The Security Council has mandated peacekeeping missions in 8 of the 15 countries most susceptible to climate risks. If that does not send us a message, I am not sure what will.

The relationship between climate and security works in complex ways. Political instability undermines efforts to build climate resilience, and the impact of climatic shocks is compounded when institutions are strained or broken. We need to address these linkages between climate, insecurity and peace as part of our conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts and responsibilities as members of the Council. We need to further build on our collective understanding of these linkages to enable us to take effective action.

Ireland is proud to join the Weathering Risk project to help guide our action on the Security Council and beyond. We are eager to better understand not just how climate change contributes to insecurity but how climate action can build peace. We wish to use this understanding as we prioritize climate and security during our time on the Council. Together with the Niger, we are chairing the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security comprised of Security Council members. This Group provides a vital platform for sharing information on the why and how of climate action in the context of building and sustaining peace. We will partner with Nauru and Germany, the Chairs of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security. While the Council must take action, it is essential to work with the wider community of nations as it does so.

Ireland's core message today is that the inclusion of climate issues in Security Council discussions and actions will strengthen conflict prevention and support peacebuilding efforts. Of course, climate action alone will not deliver peace. We recognize that fact. But without climate action, we will have less sustainable peace in many parts of the world.

Ireland will take a practical and action-orientated approach. We recognize that our peacekeepers are already responding to climate-related crises. Where climate-related security risks exist, peacekeeping operations need to be endowed with clear mandates and sufficient resources.

We also recognize the gender dimensions of climate change, with women and girls most vulnerable to its effects. These dimensions are also critical to our response to climate change, and we must ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes related to climate issues and the management of natural resources.

We must also engage deeply with young people, who have at times shown solidarity and extraordinary leadership on climate change on a global scale. But in listening to and understanding the concerns and insights of future generations, we cannot abrogate our responsibility to provide leadership today.

The world's response to the climate emergency can also be a cause for hope, which is needed right now. The vast majority of States Members of the United Nations wish to work together to ensure that we address one of the greatest challenges ever faced by humankind. We can and must work in a way that addresses the threats to global peace and security that climate change presents, enhancing global cooperation as we do so.

Climate change challenges all of humankind. But I am optimistic and, drawing from the words of James Joyce, “I am tomorrow, or some future day, what I establish today.” Starting afresh today, let us work together. This is an important year for climate action, particularly in the run-up to COP26.

Annex 13
Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico thanks United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson for convening today's debate on the effects of climate change on international peace and security.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has shown that international security can no longer be understood only in terms of traditional threats. Threats are multidimensional and linked to economic and social development challenges. It is up to the Security Council to respond in a timely manner to today's peacekeeping challenges.

The Secretary-General reminds us repeatedly that fires, floods and other extreme weather events have worsened in all regions of the world and that the risk of a potential catastrophe, which would mean a global temperature increase of more than 3°C, has increased. Food insecurity, water shortages, droughts and floods have reached alarming levels in several regions of the world, and they affect, in particular, those communities that are already immersed in conflicts, having a special impact on women.

Climate change must be addressed multilaterally through a comprehensive and coherent approach across the entire United Nations system. Mexico will spare no effort to ensure that the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, is a success and can outline actions towards a sustainable post-pandemic recovery.

We recognize the return of the United States to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and its renewed commitment to an effective measure in which Mexico has always believed, that is, multilateralism. Climate change requires a coordinated international response, with an emphasis on ecosystem conservation and support for mitigation and adaptation commitments. In that regard, Mexico has just submitted its updated nationally determined contribution to meet its Paris Agreement commitments.

As part of the Global Commission on Adaptation, Mexico promotes nature-based solutions, for example, sustainable infrastructure that provides recovery, resilience and investment so as to reduce economic and social inequalities.

Mexico promotes a balance between financial resources, political attention and efforts devoted to adaptation in addition to those that are directed only towards mitigation. Mexico believes that adaptation is a matter of priority interest given the urgency of empowering communities and those who are most vulnerable to face the impacts of climate change.

In that respect, prevention is a fundamental part of our comprehensive risk-management policy. Mexico also maintains that the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 should underpin and generate synergies and coherence with the actions undertaken within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, among other multilateral processes.

A rigorous analysis of the main risks and their specific environment would enable the Security Council to identify in a timely manner situations and areas in which the effects of climate change could have multiplier effects that affect international peace and security. That, in turn, would make it possible to take preventive action to avoid or mitigate humanitarian disasters.

The establishment of the Council's Informal Expert Group to follow up on the link between climate change and security is therefore timely and welcome. The Group, supported by the studies carried out by the cooperation-oriented Climate Security Mechanism in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, is an example of the kind of concrete steps that will help us strengthen the capacities needed by the system.

The current COVID-19 pandemic and its impact, especially in the most fragile contexts, has made clear the urgency of protecting people and their livelihoods and ensuring sustainable peacebuilding.

We agree with the Secretary-General that post-pandemic recovery is an opportunity to build back better, and we must implement transformative change. Mexico therefore reiterates its commitment to combat climate change as a priority and its willingness to work together to find global, multidimensional and structural solutions to environmental issues in order to build more equal, more sustainable and more resilient societies.

Annex 14

Statement by the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India, Prakash Javadekar

I would like to begin my statement with a short hymn from the Sukla Yajurveda.

“Let there be balance in the space, the sky, the Earth! Let there be growth in the plants, in the trees! Let there be grace in God and bliss in the soul. Let there be balance in everything and let such peace be with every one of us! From this Vedic message it is clear that the environment belongs to all living beings, so it needs protection by all and for the welfare of all.”

Climate change is a defining issue of our time. Without drastic actions by us collectively, adapting to its impacts will definitely be more difficult and cost more, in fact it might well be impossible.

The global community has addressed the issue of climate change through various mechanisms, central to which are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement negotiated under the Framework. Together they represent a delicately balanced global democratic effort to take climate action in a nationally determined manner based on certain fundamental agreed principles — foremost among which is that of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities — and which must underlie all future discussions on climate change. Therefore, before we start discussing the issue of the securitization of climate, we need to ensure that we are not building a parallel climate track where these mechanisms and principles are brushed aside or not duly considered.

The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report, entitled “Climate Change and Land”, says that extreme weather and climate or slow-onset events may lead to increased displacement, disrupted food chains and threatened livelihoods and could contribute to exacerbated stresses for conflict. Even the best science available claims that climate change only exacerbates conflict and is not a reason for conflict and does not threaten peace and security.

There is no common, widely accepted methodology for assessing the links between climate change, conflict and fragility. Fragility and climate impact are highly context-specific. In addition, both peace and conflict assessments, as well as vulnerability assessments, face significant challenges when it comes to data availability and impact measurement.

In a number of fragile contexts, where Governments are struggling to provide basic services owing to capacity and legitimacy issues, instances of chronic emergency conditions and famine risks are largely driven by continued political violence disrupting harvests and aid supplies rather than by climate factors alone. This underscores the idea that a complete picture of climate vulnerability emerges only with an assessment of the State’s capacity to be the primary responder to interrelated environmental, social, economic and security dynamics.

The nationally determined contributions are largely about mitigation commitments and adaptation requirements that collectively determine whether countries will achieve the Paris goal of limiting the global average temperate increase to well below 2°C. Parties are nowhere required to communicate on climate-related security risks in their contributions. Moreover, an in-depth analysis of the nationally determined contributions submitted in the first round has shown that Member States see climate change as a risk to the well-being of their citizens and, to some degree, their economies, but never as a risk to social stability, national sovereignty or the functioning of the State. Of the 16 countries that had submitted

their updated contributions to the UNFCCC secretariat by October 2020, none have framed climate change as a risk to peace and stability.

The idea of climate action should not be to move the climate ambition goalpost to 2050. It is important for countries to fulfil their pre-2020 commitments. Climate action needs to go hand in hand with the framework for financial, technical and capacity-building support to countries that need it.

While climate change does not directly or inherently cause violent conflict, its interaction with other social, political and economic factors can nonetheless exacerbate drivers of conflict and fragility and have negative impacts on peace, stability and security. It is for precisely that reason that developing countries' nationally determined contributions included information on adaptation activities and the need for finance, technology development and transfer, capacity-building and transparency. However, while the commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020 in support of climate action in developing countries has been central to the climate accords since 2009, the delivery on this commitment has been elusive.

The impacts of climate change and its associated security risks have important gender dimensions. Women and girls experience the interplay between climate change and peace and security in direct and profound ways. Since women are often the providers of food, water and energy for their families, they are likely to face increased challenges in accessing resources owing to climate change.

As the primary caregivers, women are often living on the front lines of climate change and have distinct knowledge and experience to contribute to building effective adaptation strategies. There is an urgent need to promote and support the meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups in national-level climate change policy and planning processes.

India has taken significant steps to fight climate change and has delivered on its commitments. Its mitigation strategies have emphasized clean and efficient energy systems; a safe, smart and sustainable green mass urban transportation network; planned afforestation; and integrating green thinking across all production and consumption sectors.

India is the only country on track among the Group of 20 nations to meet its climate-change mitigation commitments. We are not only meeting our Paris Agreement targets but will also exceed them. India currently has the fastest-growing solar energy programme in the world. We have expanded access to clean cooking fuel to more than 80 million households. This is among the largest clean energy drives globally. Our recent commitments of installing 450 gigawatts of renewable energy, the elimination of single-use plastic, 100 per cent railway electrification and the creation of an additional carbon sink by restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land among other measures have only added to our climate ambitions.

India strongly believes that the only way to generate persistent, long-term and positive action in the climate-change domain is through partnerships by undertaking collective action to make a lasting and sustainable impact. The International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure are two such initiatives by India that have been launched to address the challenges of climate change and adaptation.

There is a significant opportunity for countries to integrate low-carbon development in their coronavirus disease rescue and recovery measures and long-term mitigation strategies that are scheduled to be announced for the reconvened twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 26), in 2021.

To better integrate climate-change adaptation and peacebuilding, we would suggest the building of robust governance structures at the local, national and regional levels to address climate- and fragility-related risks. That not only improves public perception of Government legitimacy but also shores up the capacity of States to address climate risks before they become fragile. Donor countries should provide greater financial, technological and capacity-building assistance to help fragile States put in place the necessary adaptation and mitigation strategies to combat the impact of climate change.

Mahatma Gandhi once said that “there is enough for everybody’s need and not for everybody’s greed”. Let us then make the transition to a more climate-friendly lifestyle by adapting to a low carbon-development pathway, based on our needs and not on our greed. Let us view climate change as a wake-up call and an opportunity to strengthen multilateralism and seek equitable and inclusive solutions to leave a greener, cleaner and a sustainable world for our future generations.

May all sentient beings be at peace, may no one suffer from illness, may all see what is auspicious, may no one suffer. Peace, peace, peace.

Annex 15

Statement by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the United States of America, John Kerry

I thank you, Mr. President, very much. It is great to see you, Foreign Secretary Raab. I thank you, Prime Minister Johnson, for convening this essential discussion and, of course, for your leadership and partnership as we all prepare for the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 26). I also want to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for sounding the alarm on the climate crisis every chance that he gets. I thank you, Monsieur President Macron and Prime Minister Solberg, for the incredible leadership of Europe during what can only be deemed by many of us as an inexcusable absence by our country from this debate. We are grateful to Europe for stepping up.

I am really pleased to have the privilege of speaking before the Security Council today, and I thank all of my colleagues, those who have contributed and my counterpart in India, Minister Javadekar, for his important reminder of the larger issues that are at stake here.

I think it is particularly important that we are before the Security Council because the climate crisis is indisputably a Security Council issue. Our Pentagon has for years described the impact of climate as a threat multiplier. In fact, it is among the most complex and compelling security issues that I think we have ever faced. We are told repeatedly that it is an existential threat and yet, despite impacts that can exacerbate existing political, social and economic tensions, we honestly have yet as a world to respond with the urgency required.

When farmers, and others have mentioned this, can no longer make a living because the weather is so extreme and unpredictable, they become increasingly desperate. When people who are already impoverished lose water and heat drives them from their homes as it is, the embers of conflict burn brighter and faster. Studies warn us that hundreds of millions of people could be uprooted. Not only can mass migration drive humanitarian crisis, but we also know that if it is not managed well, it undermines peace and stability.

So it is vital to discuss this issue here in the Security Council, because when we talk about the climate crisis, we are talking about our security — every nation, every citizen — economic security, food security, energy security and, yes, even physical security.

The evidence, the science, is screaming at us, but just as humans have made the choices that brought us here, we can make the choices that take us to a better place. We can build resilience. We can even adapt to many of the projected impacts.

The sad reality is that if you look at a map of the most fragile States in the world and you overlay that with the map of those most vulnerable to devastating climate impacts, you can see exactly how much overlap there is. Many of the regions where we are focused on peacebuilding and conflict prevention are projected to be the literal hotspots in the coming crisis. And we know, as Ms. Elsaim powerfully described, that the conflict and the climate crisis are linked in places such as Sudan and so many others. We simply cannot ignore how climate is affecting those regions. On the contrary, climate impacts need to be reflected in every aspect of this body's decision-making and field reporting.

The good news is that even as we work to build resilience around the world and adapt to the climate consequences that are already inevitable, it is still possible to stave off the very worst impacts of the crisis. President Biden knows that we do not have a moment to waste, which is why he moved to rejoin the Paris Agreement just hours after being sworn into office. And it is why he directed a coordinated,

whole-of-Government approach to addressing the climate crisis: to elevate the issue as a national security priority and to put America on an irreversible path to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 or earlier — and, I emphasize, irreversible by any President, by any demagogue of the future.

But no one country can solve the climate crisis on its own; it is exactly the kind of challenge the United Nations was created to address. We will all have to work together, just as we did in Paris, to set bold and achievable targets and clear road maps for how we will reach them. It is not enough to have some outlying, 30-years-from-now target and pretend that we have done our job. Every country will have to step up and raise ambition. The fact is that the 17 major emitters of the world have a responsibility to the rest of the world to reduce their emissions, and that begins by reducing the use of coal on a global basis.

Nothing less than bold action in this decade can set the entire world on the path that we have confidence will get to net-zero emissions by 2050 or earlier. That is the only way that science tells us we can keep alive the possibility of limiting this planet's warming to 1.5 °C.

Why is that so critical? Because overwhelming evidence tells us that anything more will have catastrophic implications around the globe. And for those that argue that climate action is just too expensive, study after study confirms that now, at this moment in our history, inaction comes with a far higher price tag than action.

Unlike with most security threats, addressing the climate crisis actually presents the greatest economic opportunity in modern history. Not since the Industrial Revolution has there been such potential to build back better — in every corner of the world. Sadly, not doing so will leave us in a position where we are — just by inadvertence, by lack of will, by lack of coming together — marching forward in what is almost tantamount to a mutual suicide pact.

The leaders' summit that President Biden will host on Earth Day will be a critical moment to advance our shared goals. We are planning to take advantage of every opportunity we have in the coming months for all of us to work together in addressing the many facets of the crisis. In November, we will join with the rest of the world to convene in Glasgow for the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP26. I am convinced that it is literally our last, best hope to get on track and to get this right.

In the meantime, here in the Security Council, the United States will work closely with our like-minded colleagues to focus the Council's attention on the climate crisis and its consequences for international peace and security. In that vein, we congratulate Ireland on assuming the co-chairmanship, along with the Niger, of the Informal Expert Group on climate and security. We are eager to engage with the Group and advance its goals.

My friends, given the journey that many of us have been on since Rio in 1992, we are now compelled to do more than talk about climate-related security risks. We have to work together to understand them before they wreak havoc; we have to develop stronger early-warning systems; we have to mainstream the climate crisis into every aspect of our public and private sector and decision-making. In the face of climate-fuelled challenges, we have to make certain that cooperation, not conflict, is the response of first resort.

Some argue that climate change is not the business of the Security Council. Well, we could only wish that was true, but the fact is that the climate threat is so massive, so multifaceted, that it is impossible to disentangle it from the other challenges that the Security Council faces. We bury our heads in the sand at our own peril. It is time to start treating the climate crisis as the urgent security threat that it is. This is literally the challenge of all of our generations.

Annex 16

Statement by the Special Envoy for Climate Change of China, Xie Zhenhua

China welcomes Prime Minister Boris Johnson's chairing of today's open debate and thanks Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing.

Climate change has become a real, pressing and serious threat to the survival, development and security of humankind. The Paris Agreement, reached in 2015 — a milestone of global climate governance — has laid the institutional foundation for stronger climate action and global cooperation by the international community beyond 2020.

Global climate governance has now entered a crucial stage of the full implementation of the Paris Agreement, yet the continued spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has posed a serious challenge to the global climate response. China hopes that the global community will strengthen its solidarity and work together to keep the global climate response going in the right direction. To that end, I wish to propose the following.

First, we need to resolutely implement the international consensus. Global climate governance remains a lengthy and arduous task. Its centrepiece is the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement so as to fulfil the targets set and jointly meet the climate challenge. Given the differences between developed and developing countries in terms of historical responsibility, stages of development and response capacity, it is important to abide by the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, fairness and respective capabilities, and also to respect and support countries in identifying their nationally determined contributions in the light of one's own conditions, rather than follow a one-size-fits-all approach.

Developed countries should fulfil their obligation to lead emissions reductions and honour their commitments by providing greater financial and technical support to help developing countries to build their capacities. Developing countries should also take proactive climate action to the best of their ability.

Secondly, we need to actively promote a green recovery. COVID-19 is a fresh reminder of the fact that humankind must respect nature and follow its laws. As we build back from the pandemic, we should avoid the old path of taking without giving, growing but not protecting and exploiting without restoring. We must vigorously develop new energy, green and environmental industries and pursue innovations that spur green and low-carbon transformations. We should foster ecosystems that respect nature, protect global biodiversity and strengthen the defence of global ecological security. We need to champion a green lifestyle to promote harmony between humans and nature.

Thirdly, we need to vigorously pursue sustainable development. Climate change is, in essence, a development issue. Sustainable development holds the master key to solving all problems and eliminating the root causes of conflicts. The international community should help countries in conflict-affected regions, least developed countries and small island developing States to build their development capacities. Countries are encouraged to make climate response part of their economic and social development plans and to take multipronged measures for parallel and coordinated progress in economic growth, poverty reduction, job creation, health promotion, ecological conservation and climate response.

Fourthly, we need to stay committed to multilateralism. We humans are one community with a shared future in face of the climate challenge. International cooperation should be advanced through the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the main channel and within the framework of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The UNFCCC secretariat, the United Nations development system and Resident Coordinators must, based on their respective mandates, actively respond to the needs of the countries concerned in tackling climate change and promoting economic and social development, and provide targeted support accordingly. Any role that the Security Council plays on climate change needs to fall within the Council's purview.

China played a major part in the conclusion of the Paris Agreement and is also making active efforts to implement it.

We are committed to fulfilling the responsibilities that we have undertaken. Last September, President Xi Jinping announced that China will aim to have a carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, a commitment widely applauded by the international community. At the Climate Ambition Summit last December, President Xi Jinping outlined a series of new measures concerning China's nationally determined contributions. Developed countries have mostly scheduled a 50-to-60-year time frame to move from a carbon peak to carbon neutrality. China is prepared to make painstaking efforts and achieve that goal in 30 years. That is a testament to the intensity and ambition of China's climate action.

We are committed to green development. In 2020, China's carbon intensity was slashed by 48.4 per cent from the level of 2005, China's base year for nationally determined contributions, and by the end of 2019, non-fossil fuel accounted for 15.3 per cent of its primary energy consumption; indeed, the country met its 2020 targets ahead of schedule.

China's forest stock has been rising for 30 years in a row, up by 4.5 billion cubic metres over the 2005 level and exceeding the 2020 target. China now has the largest number of renewable-energy vehicles in the world and for many years has been a global leader in renewable energy in the number of patents, investment, installed capacity and power generation. China's wind and photovoltaic installed capacities both account for more than 30 per cent of the world's total.

We are committed to win-win cooperation. China has launched the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme to help Belt and Road partner countries to develop renewable energy projects including hydro, wind and photovoltaic power. China has also worked with other developing countries within a South-South cooperation framework to build low-carbon demonstration zones and undertake mitigation and adaptation projects, in pursuit of green development. China will host the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity this year. We look forward to discussing with all other parties new strategies for post-2020 global biodiversity governance.

We are convinced that when all countries come together for the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, for a cooperative, win-win, equitable and balanced climate governance system, and for sustainable development, we will be able to turn our planet Earth into an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful place that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.

Annex 17**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Vassily Nebenzia**

[Original: Russian]

We thank the Secretary-General and Ms. Elsaim for their briefings.

Climate change is one of the global challenges that humankind is facing today. To overcome its negative impacts, the international community needs to take coordinated and comprehensive approaches aimed not only at reducing greenhouse-gas emissions but also at implementing effective adaptation measures. Such efforts, including at the expert level, are part of the common efforts that must be made in the interests of sustainable development. They are under way in specialized platforms of the United Nations system — primarily the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We welcome the decision by the United States to return to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Not once has the Security Council addressed the issue of climate change in the context of its repercussions on international peace and security. It has considered country-specific cases in a range of States and regions, primarily on the African continent, where climate change and natural disasters have been said to be the major threat to stability and the root cause of related problems. References have also been made to the increasing threat of conflicts, with such scenarios projected onto the global perspective. We agree that climate change and environmental problems can exacerbate conflicts. But are they the root cause thereof? That is rather doubtful.

First, the connection between climate and conflict can be considered only with regard to concrete country- and region-specific cases. There is no reason to refer to it in a generic manner and a global context; in addition, to assert that such a connection is automatic can be dangerous. Besides, not every conflict entails the threats to international peace and security with which the Security Council deals.

Secondly, to assume that climate change is the root cause of security issues would mean failing to determine its true causes and taking the wrong path when trying to resolve those issues.

Thirdly, we must not pass over in silence other fundamental factors that are just as, or possibly even more, fraught with risks. Here I refer to the political and socioeconomic conditions in specific countries and regions, which have been aggravated by the coronavirus disease pandemic. The virus has exposed inequalities among and within States and exacerbated poverty and starvation, in particular in conflict-affected countries. Illegal unilateral restrictions add to those problems, even as those who impose them choose to ignore the obvious harm they are doing.

When emphasizing the climate issue, donor States often shy away from discussing the complex nature of the challenges facing sustainable development. These include the refusal to take part in technology exchanges and “green” protectionism. Would it not be better for donors to focus on abiding by their already agreed financial obligations and ensuring access to the best technologies to increase resilience and adaptation, as well as assisting with the implementation of climate-education projects?

That is the essence of a well-balanced preventive approach that takes account of the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Indeed, the discussions on the climate agenda in the Security Council appear advantageous and politically meaningful. Yet the real work of enhancing international coordination

on this track is in fact more practical when it takes place in specialized bodies such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations development system and, of course, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Going back to the problem of climate change in the context of international peace and security, we cannot fail to mention that conflict in and of itself undermines the capacity of States to increase resilience and adapt to the negative consequences of climate change, as well as diverting their already limited resources.

The Sahel is cited as a recent, indicative example of a region where climate change directly affects stability. However, we must not overlook the reasons that have exacerbated the security risks there. Among them are the voluntarist actions taken by some States that led to regime change in Libya and the environmental impact of NATO bomb and missile strikes, *inter alia* against the oil infrastructure. That is an example of the environment being sacrificed to geopolitics, and we could cite numerous similar examples.

Russia believes that there is an urgent need to respond to climate change. However, that should be done with mechanisms specifically mandated to do so. It is important to focus on the effective implementation of the internationally agreed obligations in the framework of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, while gradually stepping up their level of ambition. At the same time, in our post-pandemic recovery, we must not relax broader global and national efforts to address socioeconomic problems for the sake of sustainable development.

Annex 18

Statement by the President of Malawi, Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera

I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

I would like to begin by thanking the Right Honourable Boris Johnson for extending an invitation to my delegation, in its capacity as Chair of the LDC group, to address the Security Council.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has proved to be a debilitating crisis for the LDCs — impacting the health, social and economic sectors. It is quite clear that the quest to address the disruptions caused by the pandemic has caused many pre-existing development issues to be sidelined. That will have serious impacts on the ability of LDCs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The climate emergency is likely to further intensify competition for resources and threaten the very existence of hundreds of millions of people. The climate-change-security nexus takes many forms. Climate refugees are people who leave their homes because of conflicts emanating from water scarcity, cyclones, desertification and other climate-related natural phenomena. For example, fights for grazing land are frequent in Africa.

With only 0.34 metric tons per capita of carbon dioxide emissions, compared with 10.4 metric tons in high-income countries, the LDCs are bearing the brunt of the impacts of climate change. Tens of millions of our people are being pushed into extreme poverty, thus worsening existing inequalities. Projections by the World Economic Outlook of the International Monetary Fund show that in 2021, world output will grow by 5.5 per cent, while sub-Saharan Africa, including the LDCs, will grow at only 3.2 per cent — thereby exacerbating existing inequalities.

Climate change, like the COVID-19 pandemic, knows neither borders nor race. It continues to impact both rich and poor countries indiscriminately. The LDC group welcomes all discussions on climate security but insists on finding concrete solutions aimed at enhancing climate adaptation and resilience for all, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable countries. The LDC group would like to highlight the following points for the Council's consideration with a view to addressing climate change and achieving sustainable development, peace and security.

First, the immediate task ahead of us is to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. That process should be aligned with a transformation pathway to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C, in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Secondly, we must limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Existing commitments to cut emissions are woefully inadequate in developed countries, and advanced developing countries must come forward with ambitious emission cuts at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). We are encouraged by the fact that the United States officially rejoined the Paris climate accord last Friday, thus generating further momentum in global efforts to tackle climate change.

Thirdly, the United Nations Adaptation Finance Gap Report estimated that by 2030, adaptation costs are likely to be in the range of \$140 billion to \$300 billion per annum. Increasing climate finance accessibility, including for adaptation and loss and damage, also remains critical. Developed countries should fulfil their commitments to provide \$100 billion annually in climate financing, in a predictable manner. In that regard, we reiterate the call to allocate 50 per cent of the Green Climate Fund

for adaptation, and 50 per cent of those funds should be allocated to the LDCs, small island developing States and vulnerable countries in Africa. We call for a binding commitment from the international community on this quantitative target at COP26 and the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The Security Council should promote adaptation as a prevention paradigm while strengthening the international framework for addressing loss and damage.

Fourthly, developed countries should actively and meaningfully transfer climate-friendly technologies to help LDCs build their capacity for adaptation and mitigation and accelerate green development.

Fifthly, the LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience, announced at the Climate Action Summit in September 2019, steps up the climate ambition of LDCs. We reiterate our commitment to the vision to deliver climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.

Sixthly, all agencies responsible for disbursing climate financing should ensure that the resources trickle down to local communities. Past reports have shown that less than 20 per cent of total financing benefited local communities in LDCs. We thank the Green Climate Fund and encourage further reforms aimed at making timely disbursements of financial resources and simplifying methodologies for approving eligible projects.

In conclusion, we look forward to further discussions on various agendas of the Paris Agreement on the road to COP26. We also look forward to the active engagement and participation of various climate stakeholders and experts in the process for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Doha from 23 to 27 January 2022. My country is currently hosting the African Regional Review meetings for LDCs, and I thank the United Nations and all the organizers and participants in that regard.

Annex 19

Statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Alphonso Browne

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Make no mistake — the existential threat climate change poses to our survival is not a future consideration, but a current reality.

Climate change and its adverse effects are threats to peace and security across the globe. The ever-increasing frequency and severity of tropical cyclones, droughts, sea level rise and desertification all account for the displacement of populations and are drivers for national and international conflicts worldwide.

For the past 30 years, AOSIS has been the single most consistent advocate on climate. Over that time span, we have pressed for ambitious action through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, its Kyoto Protocol and its Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which remain today the primary international forums for determining the global response to climate change.

As Chair of AOSIS, I want to highlight the often-overlooked threats faced by our small island developing States (SIDS), specifically in the light of our fragility and, more particularly, our vulnerability.

The peace and security of SIDS is precarious and is extremely vulnerable to destruction on multiple fronts — sometimes at a moment's notice, be it from sea level rise devouring our primarily coastal and low-lying communities and territories, more severe and frequent droughts and ocean acidification undermining our water supply and food security; or even more severe and frequent tropical cyclones, rendering our States uninhabitable.

The latter scenario is not hypothetical for my country. Our experience evacuating the citizens and residents of our sister island, Barbuda, in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, was nothing short of devastating.

Had the hurricane shifted its course ever so slightly, it would have decimated Antigua as well, resulting in carnage similar to the aftermath of war. In hindsight, I shudder to think what would have happened to the entire population of my country and what international plan and system my country would have recourse to following such an attack on our peace and security.

All SIDS continue to live through constant assaults from climate change that undermine our peace and security, including our economic security; energy, water and food security; national security; territorial integrity and State sovereignty; and our people's right to self-determination.

As a result, my fellow SIDS leaders and I are forced to govern in extremely challenging circumstances caused by climate change and other factors. Compounding those challenges is the international response to the root causes of the threats against our peace and security, which is fragmented and, quite frankly, inadequate.

SIDS have observed a glaring gap in the international community's pursuit for the widest possible cooperation by all countries for an effective and appropriate response. As a particularly vulnerable constituency that contributed the least to climate change, we take this opportunity to remind States that we all have common but differentiated responsibilities to address climate change, its adverse effects and associated loss and damage. Continuing our work without an equitable, coordinated

and sufficient global response leaves SIDS with gross uncertainties about our population's lives and livelihoods.

That is not to say that SIDS do not see the value in preventive action. On the contrary, we understand and continue to engage in adaptation actions — to the greatest extent possible with the limited resources at our disposal — as a means of preparing for the negative impacts of climate change.

The pursuit of climate resilience is of the utmost importance to us. There is a considerable need for support from developed countries through grant and concessional financing, capacity-building and technology transfer in order to achieve such resilience.

Furthermore, on preventive action, we cannot ignore the crucial necessity for all State parties to submit and, more importantly, implement ambitious, equitable and evidence-based nationally determined contributions, in line with the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It is of paramount importance that all State parties reaffirm their unequivocal commitment to upholding the Paris Agreement and to take bold and decisive action in order to enhance their climate ambitions to achieve carbon neutrality.

In the light of the coronavirus disease pandemic and the resulting exposure to a whole range of compounding risks that can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and challenges, including climate change, we wish to stress that environmental accountability and the safeguarding of our natural heritage is crucial to humankind and the survival of our planet.

Nevertheless, there are scientific limits to what we, as SIDS, can adapt. As an international community, we must simultaneously plan and operationalize a system to address inevitable loss and damage, which uproot SIDS' peace and security.

It is therefore incumbent upon us to provide equitable solutions in line with countries' international obligations and rights in order to systematically address difficult issues such as climate-change displacement, including the treatment of climate refugees and internally displaced persons and the loss of territory. Having a truly international plan and system for addressing climate change-related disrupters to international peace and security will allow for its continued maintenance. By acknowledging that we live in an interconnected global economy, this organized and coordinated approach will benefit all parties concerned by providing some level of certainty on the required global response.

I am very aware that these are difficult topics. But on this matter, I ask: "If not us, who, and if not now, when?"

On that note, I commend the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council for the month of February for having organized this high-level open debate on climate-related risks to international peace and security.

It is of the utmost importance that we continue addressing this problem. Climate change demands inclusive governance solutions that involve adjusting old norms and incorporating new ideas.

As climate change continues to threaten peace and security, SIDS are asking for an all-hands-on-deck approach. We therefore encourage the Security Council to continue to host high-level open debates on climate security that are inclusive of States Members of the United Nations, scientists, academia and civil society.

In addition, we would like to see the development of a climate-security risk assessment tool — with the input of all States Members of the United Nations — that is both preventive and reactive to climatic events.

Finally, for the past 30 years, small island and low-lying States have been sounding the alarm, sending an SOS distress signal. We are losing our territories, populations and resources, and our very existence is at stake — all due to climate change.

The world is also facing this threat — not of weapons, but of climate change, an invisible enemy that we all agree is real. Sadly, SIDS continue to be on the front line for this war. We appeal to the Council to take this threat very seriously before it is too late.

Annex 20

Statement by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Heiko Maas

It is my honour to address the Council on behalf of the 54 members of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security, a broad and diverse group of countries from all continents. We are united by a common concern — climate change is the existential threat of our times.

Once again, last year was the hottest year on record. We are witnessing storms, droughts and flooding like never before. Degraded ecosystems and the loss of species threaten food security and our long-term survival. The poorest and most vulnerable will suffer the most, because fragile countries are disproportionately affected by climate change, and entire island nations are at risk of disappearing.

The youth of the world is demanding action. If we do not act, we are putting their future, safety, well-being and health at risk. I thank Prime Minister Johnson for his leadership. He can count on our support ahead of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, and we are delighted to welcome the United States back to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We look forward to the new Administration's re-engagement.

The European Union and many countries have set more ambitious goals in recent months, but more needs to be done to make the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties a real success. The entire United Nations system must make a concerted effort to make climate action its top priority. I thank my friend, António Guterres, for his leadership in that regard.

The evidence is clear. The effects of climate change fuel conflicts. They make it harder to build peace and negatively affect social and gender equality. No State or society will be immune to climate change, but we can and must strengthen our resilience. The United Nations has a key role to play in that connection. It can build on the progress we have already made, for example with the establishment of the Climate Security Mechanism.

The entire United Nations system must rise to the challenge, in all relevant forums. "Climate and security" belongs firmly on the Security Council agenda, reflecting the Council's "primary responsibility for [...] international peace and security".

Some progress was made by addressing climate change in many specific mandates and by establishing the Informal Expert Group of members of the Security Council. But that is only the beginning. Last July, our friends from Nauru spoke here for the Group of Friends on Climate and Security and presented the Council with a "plan of action" (S/2020/751, annex 21).

Today we are again calling for regular reporting by the Secretary-General on the security implications of climate change; the appointment of a special representative for climate and security; climate-sensitive prevention, mediation and peacebuilding; training for all relevant United Nations personnel on the implications of climate change for peace and security and humanitarian crises; and, finally, for more cooperation with civil society and regional and national actors on climate-related security risks.

Last year, 10 members of the Security Council, including Germany, translated that plan into a draft resolution. Now is the moment to put a strong text back on the table and to adopt it.

We stand ready to work with Council members towards achieving a resolution that reflects the points I just outlined. A strong resolution would demonstrate to the world that the Security Council is showing leadership on what is one of the gravest threats to peace and security of our times. There is no time to lose. Let us turn words into action. Let us act together. And let us do so now.

Annex 21

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, Adela Raz

Allow me to first thank the United Kingdom presidency for hosting this vital meeting and for championing the consideration of the climate-security nexus in the Council. I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres, Sir David Attenborough and Ms. Nisreen Elsaim for their insightful statements. As the effects of the climate crisis are increasingly ravaging the developing world, the need for thorough discussions and action on the undeniable intersection between climate and security is pressing.

As you all know, we have been severely affected by more than four decades of conflict. But in addition, Afghanistan is also among the epicentres of the intersection between climate change and insecurity and has been consistently ranked as one of the States most vulnerable to the effects of the current climate crisis. The latter is certainly a consequence of, and a contributing factor to, the former.

It is easy to recognize how 40 years of war have made Afghanistan more vulnerable to climate change. It has destroyed physical and human capital, which is today limiting our adaptive capacity. War, accelerating climate change and global warming have also directly contributed to deforestation, which has increased people's vulnerability to natural disasters and contributed to shrinking arable land. Insecurity is, furthermore, limiting our ability to attract private investment for climate adaptation.

But climate change has also started to act as a threat multiplier and, in some cases, has directly contributed and continues to contribute to the conflict. As clearly stated in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2021-2025, the potential climate-induced risks entangled with conflict and insecurity are a critical challenge that threatens the foundations of Afghanistan's stability, economy and food security and could pose significant challenges to the sectoral gains of the past 19 years.

Allow me to now highlight three specific ways in which the effects of climate change have had and will continue to have an impact on rising insecurity in Afghanistan. First, climate change is exacerbating poverty and creating opportunities for terrorist groups to take advantage of and recruit to their ranks those in need. The increased scarcity of resources and socioeconomic impacts of a changing climate have forced some young, vulnerable Afghans and, at times, children to act in desperation and join terrorist groups to make ends meet. These are people who feel they have no choice, but who in fact have the right to dream of a future of peace, not one of desperation and conflict.

Secondly, analysis suggests that water and land scarcity, exacerbated by climate change, is a major driver of local-level and intercommunal conflicts. One United Nations study estimates that up to 93 per cent of local disputes are related to conflicts over land and water. Afghanistan has not yet seen the types of widespread conflicts between pastoral and agricultural communities observed elsewhere. But, as the climate changes, the risk of similar disputes in Afghanistan will increase and, in some areas, the scarcity of water has already fuelled local conflicts.

Thirdly, there is an observed impact of climate change and environmental risks on the individual Afghan's resilience and vulnerability, which is prolonging humanitarian emergencies and contributing to a deteriorating conflict environment. For example, following the 2018 droughts, which were exacerbated by climate change, many families' debt levels rose dramatically. In turn, increased debt levels

have increased their vulnerability and made many less resilient to new shocks and more likely to fall back on harmful coping mechanisms in the face of crisis.

The Government's resources are spread thin in protecting our people against the inhumane attacks of terrorist groups. We understand that if we do not mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to its consequences, we will effectively fail at ensuring the security of our country. As such, we believe that we must continue to discuss the climate-security nexus and further analyse how to best tackle climate dynamics within our security responses. We must seek regional solutions based on international models. We ask that the Council continue its debates on climate security and further consider the impacts and how to mitigate them in Afghanistan.

Annex 22
Statement by the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations

[Original: Spanish]

Climate change is a complex phenomenon that has multidimensional consequences and impacts the development of societies. Moreover, among its impacts on natural systems, it has a considerable effect on human systems, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and gaps.

Beyond the potential relevance of climate change to the international security agenda, very different contexts and tools already exist to tackle each question. The primary responsibility of the Security Council pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. Other issues, including those relating to sustainable development, such as climate change, are the responsibility of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for its part, devoted 17 Sustainable Development Goals linking the three — economic, social and environmental — dimensions of sustainable development. In the environmental realm, Member States expressed their determination to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, the sustainable management of natural resources and urgent steps to tackle climate change in such a way as to meet the needs of present and future generations. Moreover, the General Assembly reaffirmed all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including that of common but differentiated responsibility. The Assembly also reaffirmed that each State has full and permanent sovereignty over the entirety of its natural patrimony and resources, and its economic activity, and that it exercises that sovereignty in full freedom.

In order to prevent the consequences of climate change from driving social or economic conflict, there is a need to ensure the full and effective implementation of the commitments that States undertook under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, as well as the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, there is a need to promote adequate and flexible cooperation among the various bodies in accordance with the Charter mandates established for the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the Organization. Such cooperation must not be carried out in such a manner as to add the issue of climate change to the agenda of the Security Council.

We support cooperation and resource mobilization for prevention, adaptation and mitigation as the basis for averting conflict situations deriving from climate change that could have an impact on international security. We must therefore redouble our efforts to tackle climate change through the relevant specialized bodies, processes and tools in the realm of sustainable development without undermining their mandates or delegating responsibilities to other forums.

Annex 23

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations

In a variety of forums, consideration has been given to the question of climate change and the resulting risks to international peace and security. It is timely to have this open debate in the Security Council now.

International efforts to combat climate change are gaining momentum, ambitions to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases are increasing, and corresponding action will have to follow soon in order to reach the international climate and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in tandem. However, there is still a large gap between the global efforts made to date and the reductions that are necessary to keep the global temperature increase well below 2°C.

Climate change is a cross-cutting issue that needs to be addressed from many angles. The international community and the Security Council in particular has to be prepared to deal with the resulting security-related risks.

Austria, as a neutral State and a member of the European Union (EU), has been active in shaping EU strategies, policies and related legal acts in the pertinent field of crisis management, security and defence; climate change and energy transition; disaster risk management; and global governance and support for multilateralism. The European Green Deal and measures for a green recovery are essential to combine effective climate action with a just transition. In order to promote this at the global level, the EU has recently adopted Council of the European Union conclusions on climate and energy diplomacy.

Against that backdrop, Austria would like to touch on the guiding questions posed for the current debate in the following manner: building resilience effectively and globally requires concerted action by Governments, regions, peoples and societies. Resilience and adaptation measures need to be considered holistically and across multiple sectors, including education and health. All relevant groups have to be included in decision-making processes and in implementation. That will promote buy-in by nations, States and societal groups and thus prevent conflict.

Enhancing resilience vis-à-vis the adverse impacts of climate change, including natural disasters, and enhancing the ability to adapt to and rapidly recover from the impact of climate change is also highly relevant for the security of the food and energy supply. A safe, sustainable, resilient and affordable supply of food and energy constitutes the backbone of our economies and contributes to economic and social stability. Integrated resources and resilience planning is important for ensuring the supply of those services. A particular aspect to note is that in many countries, the armed forces rank among the biggest energy consumers, and, in most armed forces, energy-saving measures have not been high on the agenda. Therefore, speedy and comprehensive action in that area is highly important, and best practices should be promoted.

International solidarity, in particular with fragile States, is also important for strengthening resilience wherever it may be lacking. Successful adaptation to climate change will reduce the pressure on people to migrate away from their homes in order to survive. Climate change and the resulting degradation of water, land and food resources are drivers for irregular migration that can lead to conflict. The Austrian Development Cooperation attempts to address such root causes of conflict and irregular migration.

Climate change features as a cross-cutting theme and needs to be taken into consideration in all fields of international cooperation. Other countries will

proceed in a similar manner. Effective donor coordination will help leverage synergies. However, traditional development and climate finance can only catalyse the necessary transformation towards resilience. Aligning finance flows with the objectives of the Paris Agreement is key. Tackling climate change also goes hand in hand with preventing and reversing the loss of biodiversity, with environmental protection in general, and with the achievement of the SDGs.

The global climate governance structure — that is to say, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — is not designed to deal with conflicts. We should aim at mainstreaming climate-related conflict risk dimensions into forums dealing with security issues, in particular the Security Council. However, UNFCCC work on resilience and adaptation, as well as national planning on these issues, is extremely important to create an environment where conflict risk is not exacerbated through the adverse impacts of climate change and, therefore, should be taken into account in discussions on conflict and security in general.

The implementation of nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans requires adequate means. These will have to come from national budgets, private investment and international support — however, not within the narrow framework of climate finance alone, but through a much broader array of sources. Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse-gas emissions and climate-resilient development would contribute largely to mitigating climate-related conflict risk.

While a prominent task of the Security Council is to act with respect to threats to peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression, its primary responsibility lies more broadly in maintaining international peace and security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. This includes its competence to investigate any situation, such as climate change and its adverse impacts, which may lead to international friction — for example, due to climate-related irregular migration; competition for water and other scarce resources exacerbated by climate change; new maritime routes due to climate change; or changing courses of border rivers — in order to determine the danger posed to international peace and security. The current debate is already part of such an investigation. The resulting increased awareness among Member States of the risk of climate-related conflict will be an additional driver for increased climate ambition and action.

In addition, the Security Council could call on regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to address the issue of climate and security. In part, that has already been done. Further dialogue on and mainstreaming of climate change in the security agenda would enhance a common understanding of the issues involved and thus promote a common approach to addressing them. Moreover, international and regional organizations can serve as forums to develop confidence-building measures aimed at facilitating cooperation and addressing potential climate-related conflicts.

Gender roles have been stereotyped for centuries across many cultures, in particular in conflict situations. Societies based on gender equality and in which women and girls are empowered to fully and equally participate in decision-making processes in sustainable development, in climate action and in conflict prevention and resolution are more stable. Austria devotes great attention to both resolution 1325 (2000) and the women and peace and security agenda as a whole, and the wider issue of the better integration of women and girls into productive economic and societal processes. In particular, gender mainstreaming and the definition of gender-specific results and indicators play an important role in projects and programmes of the Austrian Development Cooperation. At the same time, engaging men and boys

is important for the achievement of gender equality. In that regard, it is particularly important to aim for the inclusive development and implementation of climate action at local levels, engaging entire communities and ensuring their buy-in, which also contributes to the inclusion of minorities. That also provides an opportunity to make the best use of traditional knowledge in addressing climate change.

It is noteworthy that climate change has specific adverse effects on women and girls. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has pointed out, in General Recommendation No. 37, that it is imperative to take action to mitigate and adapt to the direct and indirect adverse impacts of climate change on women and girls. In addition, Human Rights Council resolution 40/11 declared that “promoting respect, support and protection for the activities of human rights defenders, including women and indigenous human rights defenders”, is essential to both human rights and environmental protection.

In terms of both the effects of climate change and conflict on women and girls, and the potential contribution that women and girls can make to climate action, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, there is a case for integrating climate change and security into the broader Security Council agenda.

Moreover, it is also important to integrate climate change and security into efforts aimed at the protection of civilians, in particular against the background of increasing climate-related tensions and conflicts.

In addition, there would be the possibility for the Security Council to call on parties to a climate-change-related dispute to settle their dispute by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their choice. Austria intends to strengthen its own capacity to facilitate mediation, for example regarding water-related disputes. What is more, the Security Council could guide other bodies and organizations to conduct targeted analytical, early-warning and preventive studies and activities related to climate change and security.

Against the backdrop of the devastating humanitarian consequences of a nuclear war, including climate-change-induced famine, Austria has long been a fervent critic of nuclear arms. As recalled in the concept note (S/2021/155, annex), the Security Council itself has recognized on numerous occasions that preventing future conflict is more effective than responding to its fallout. As noted in a United Nations-World Bank report, effective conflict prevention is long-term and requires upstream action on risks well before they translate into crises.

In Austria's view, due consideration should thus be given to the grave environmental consequences of any detonation of nuclear weapons, whether by accident, misunderstanding or design. The existence of nuclear weapons carries with it the inherent risk of an environmental catastrophe, a nuclear winter with severe impact on staple food production in large parts of the world. Nuclear weapons thus carry a high potential to lead to a further climate-related conflict. Measures that reduce nuclear-weapon arsenals and/or lower the likelihood of their use therefore also address risks of and responses to climate-related conflict.

The breadth of consequences of a nuclear-weapon explosion have received increased attention in recent years. The international community is now more aware about the short- and long-term consequences of nuclear-weapon explosions on public health, the environment, climate disruption, food security, migration, development-related issues and infrastructure, among other things. The various risks that could result in a deliberate or accidental explosion of nuclear weapons, such as human error, negligence, miscalculation, technical errors and vulnerabilities of nuclear weapons and their infrastructure, have also come increasingly into focus.

Furthermore, the long-lasting, direct and indirect environmental and human consequences of nuclear testing must be taken into due consideration. The history of nuclear testing has left a devastating legacy for affected communities, leaving their territories contaminated and uninhabitable. It is high time to close the door on nuclear testing and bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to react robustly to any preparations for further testing.

The Security Council and States Members of the United Nations should therefore engage in broad discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, take urgent measures to reduce nuclear risks, ensure universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and, pending its entry into force, commit to and maintain the moratorium on any nuclear testing.

These points illustrate the fact that we need to address a range of issues and take numerous steps. Other Member States will certainly have their own comments and ideas. Strong and effective multilateralism is the best approach to dealing with such global issues. Austria welcomes the current debate on climate and security and looks forward to continued engagement on this issue within the Security Council.

Annex 24

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Rabab Fatima

I thank the United Kingdom's presidency for convening today's high-level open debate of the Security Council on "Maintenance of international peace and security: Climate security". I also thank the Secretary-General for sharing his important insights on this issue.

Bangladesh contributes the least to global greenhouse-gas emissions. Yet we feature among the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. According to the Germanwatch climate risk index, Bangladesh is the seventh worst-hit nation due to extreme weather events. Amid the outbreak of the coronavirus disease pandemic, we were battered by super-cyclone Amphan and recurrent monsoon floods. Climate change is indeed an existential issue for us. Just a 1-metre rise in sea level could inundate one fifth of Bangladesh.

We recently took over the presidency of the 48-member Climate Vulnerable Forum. As President, we expect to make progress on issues vital to Forum countries at the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Glasgow.

Bangladesh is of the firm view that climate change and related disasters are a development issue and must be addressed in the context of international development cooperation. Big emitters need to go for rapid mitigation of greenhouse gases. Also, there should be adequate resources and technology support for the most vulnerable countries to address the challenges.

Climate financing remains woeful, especially for the most vulnerable countries. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction must be implemented in their true letter and spirit.

We acknowledge the multifaceted risks posed by climate-induced disasters, especially in cases of large-scale population displacement. In that context, we underscore the need to establish an evidence-based nexus between climate change and international peace. The International Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report specifies that "the evidence on the effect of climate change and variability on violence is contested". However, it recognizes the impacts of climate change on human security, especially for those who are already marginalized. We need to be cautious about espousing an alarmist approach to that issue. Let me share a few specific thoughts in that regard.

First, we see climate change as a risk multiplier that may affect various dimensions of human security in climate-vulnerable countries. It may create new risks or exacerbate existing ones by undermining food security, water security, energy security, livelihood security, et cetera. It is imperative to create opportunities for alternative livelihoods and encourage localized solutions to such pressing problems, especially to prevent or minimize population displacement.

Secondly, we need to factor in climate change impacts on sustained livelihoods, population displacement and socioeconomic shocks with the help of a development and human security lens. The United Nations must take an evidence-based approach that draws on national and subnational sources of information to act appropriately.

Thirdly, in a conflict situation, the impacts of climate change may interact with other drivers of fragility to further exacerbate the human security challenges. With its mandate of peacebuilding and sustaining peace, the Peacebuilding Commission can play a crucial role in such contexts. Prevention at the source will be the key.

Fourthly, it is important to leverage the synergies among the peace, development and humanitarian actors. The twin resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace — resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262 — stress such a cross-cutting approach. Oversecuritization of the climate-change discourse must be avoided. It is imperative not to divert any resources from the global efforts of mitigation and adaptation.

Finally, the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review encourages the United Nations to mainstream the implementation of the Paris Agreement in the strategic plans of the funds and programmes. It is therefore imperative to include the key components of the climate priorities of national Governments, including intended nationally determined contributions, in United Nations in-country planning.

Annex 25**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations**

[Original: English and French]

We thank the United Kingdom for the initiative of today's meeting, and we align ourselves with the statement submitted on behalf of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security (annex 20).

We share the view of almost all Security Council members that demand a more active role from the Council to address climate-related security risks. It is the only United Nations institution with a mandate to maintain international peace and security. It needs to deliver on that mandate.

Climate change does not respect national borders, and neither do the more frequent and extreme weather events that it causes. Droughts, food insecurity, population displacement, biodiversity loss and the melting of polar caps are all already increasing social and political tensions. The coronavirus disease pandemic demonstrates how global challenges need global responses, including from the Security Council.

Belgium sees three priority actions for the Security Council with regard to climate and security: first, mainstreaming climate risk throughout its agenda; secondly, strengthened institutionalization; and, thirdly, requesting a regular report of the Secretary-General to improve our information basis.

First is mainstreaming, which was a key priority of Belgium during its recent mandate. The Security Council has increasingly recognized how climate change impacts international peace and security. As a result, it has progressively mandated United Nations missions to take climate-related security risks into account and support partner Governments in managing them. Currently, 13 Security Council resolutions can be regarded as climate-sensitive. We encourage the Council to continue in that regard and expect regular country-level reporting to be climate-sensitive. United Nations missions should have a dedicated capacity in terms of both personnel and training to deliver on such mandates.

Secondly, we welcome the further institutionalization of this topic within the Council through the launch of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security. That will allow the members to more systematically assess the prominence of climate-related security risks by country and region. A thematic resolution on climate and security is urgently needed to provide a stronger legal basis for the Council's engagement. The United Nations also needs an institutional clearing house that mobilizes the existing expertise and makes it available to the Security Council. We strongly support the climate security mechanism in that regard and have contributed to its reinforcement.

Thirdly, we repeat our long-standing request for a regular comprehensive report of the Secretary-General. That should assess the peace and security implications of climate change across the globe and allow us to focus on the countries and regions most affected. It should include a gender-sensitive assessment of early warning indicators and foresights of climate-related security risks, as well as concrete recommendations for action by United Nations organs to address those risks.

Beyond the mandate of the Council, the global community needs to urgently step up with regard to climate action. National adaptation plans should integrate security risks. Nationally determined contributions need to reflect the level of ambition necessary to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C, in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Much more is needed in terms of climate finance.

Since 2013, Belgium has spent more than €700 million to support climate action in the Global South. We have doubled our contribution to the Green Climate Fund and are committed to scaling up our climate finance significantly in the coming years, focusing on adaption and the least developed countries. Our aim is to reach €100 million a year.

Climate change is here now and no nation can face it alone. We need to reinforce partnerships between the United Nations and regional actors, such as the African Union, the European Union and NATO. Current and future generations look to us for strong and concerted action. Let us not fail them.

Annex 26

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, Ronaldo Costa Filho

I would like to thank the United Kingdom for the initiative of convening this debate and providing us with the opportunity to further advance our exchange of views on the ongoing debate on climate and security. It allows us to build on previous discussions on the subject, such as the debate held on 24 July 2020 (see S/2020/751). As Brazil highlighted on that occasion (see S/2020/751, annex 22) and now reiterates, while open debates are welcome and constructive, we must be careful not to frame the climate change issue in security terms.

Environmental challenges should not be detached from sustainable development discussions, where they can be better assessed in conjunction with related social and economic issues. A securitization of the climate agenda would be both undesirable and counterproductive. At a security-centred discussion, key social and economic aspects tend to be sidelined by military components. As a result, environmental challenges would be in constant risk of being addressed with inappropriate tools, such as military or coercive measures. Military tools can neither tackle environmental challenges nor achieve sustainable development. Furthermore, they would waste multilateral effort and resources on a problem that cannot be solved by force.

In the spirit of streamlining and rationalizing the multilateral agenda, we must strive to avoid duplication of work and ensure that specific mandates and responsibilities are respected. A reallocation of the climate agenda to the Security Council would curb representativeness regarding a topic that interests the whole United Nations membership and has its own, more representative, dedicated multilateral regime.

The international regime formed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change outlines the discussions on this subject, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the respective capabilities of States. A securitization shift of the climate agenda would result in an unwanted diversion of attention and resources from initiatives developed over decades that, by making use of more suitable approaches, are more likely to generate positive outcomes.

Discussions on that subject at times offer flawed causal links between climate and conflict. The use of controversial terms such as “climate-security nexus” and “climate-related security risks” can counterproductively reinforce a mistaken assumption that climate change automatically leads to conflict, neglecting the context-specific, complex and interdependent origin that conflict often has.

The conditions that lead a society to the path of conflict require an in-depth understanding of the various socioeconomic and cultural fabrics, with their unique specificities. We should therefore proceed with the utmost caution before branding environmental challenges as outright threats to peace and security.

Sustainable development must be addressed holistically. If we are to achieve sustainable development, its environmental dimension must be analysed in conjunction with its other two dimensions, namely, its social and economic pillars. I would like to point out that the four-page concept note for today’s event (S/2021/155, annex), transmitted as an annex to the letter dated 17 February, fails to mention the expression “sustainable development”. Although some acknowledgements of socioeconomic pressures and other related terms are present, the omission of such

an underpinning concept of this debate conveys the precise point that the security lens is not the most suited to looking at climate change issues.

Rather, climate change should be handled with development tools in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. Climate change requires simultaneous political, economic and social approaches rather than security responses.

The energy diverted by developed countries to securitize the climate agenda would be better spent in fostering financial mechanisms aimed at supporting enhanced climate action.

As proposed by some Member States at the previous debate in July 2020, the Security Council should address climate change issues only on a case-by-case basis in the context of concrete threats to international peace and security. As a principle, it should refrain from seeking comprehensive one-size-fits-all formulas on the proposed topic.

Annex 27**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Chile welcomes the inclusion of this important issue in the debates of the Security Council. We are grateful for the briefings by Secretary-General António Guterres, Professor Johan Rockström, an environmental scientist, and civil society groups and young climate activists, who have provided valuable insights and allowed us to define this issue, as well as its scope and implications.

This debate is taking place at a crucial time given the urgent need to take ambitious action on climate change, especially in the difficult context posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has provided scientific evidence on the ambition required to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Achieving such a goal requires not only greater ambition in mitigation efforts, but also long-term adaptation policies. Science has shown us that rising global temperatures will cause serious damage to marine ecosystems and the ecosystem services provided by the ocean through processes such as acidification, deoxygenation and sea level rise. All those factors represent significant threats to the well-being of many communities and require us to take effective preventive action.

My country is no stranger to the security threats of climate change. Chile is vulnerable to seven of the nine criteria set out by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and that has significant implications for identifying threats to national security. For example, Chile's long coastal zone makes us very vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to rising sea levels. At the same time, the scarcity of marine and land resources, which are impacted by the change in climate patterns, could create challenges for food security, supply chains and control of illicit activities.

Finally, we believe that the efforts of defence-related activities, associated industry and security policy planning can also seek to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to climate change adaptation. The best way to prevent or reduce the security impacts of climate change is through ambitious mitigation and adaptation policies. The more greenhouse gas mitigation we achieve today, the less adaptation costs we will have tomorrow. The more effective our adaptation and resilience policies are, the less stress will be placed on our populations in the case of extreme or slow onset climate events.

As President of the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Chile wishes to emphasize the need to increase ambition regarding climate action. In our run-up to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow, it is essential that countries submit new nationally determined contributions that aim for higher targets, based on solidarity and the need to help the most vulnerable populations.

In the immediate term, our national security systems must promote international collaboration and the establishment of mutual confidence-building measures that enable us to coordinate actions to alleviate the potential stresses associated with climate events. Global warming is seen as an inevitable reality and should therefore also lead us to embrace the necessary task of working together to address it.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that climate change is the most urgent problem facing our generation, and the scientific evidence is unequivocal regarding

the adverse impact that human activity has had on the climate, which obliges us to take immediate action, enabling us to be preventive and not reactive. However, we must assume that the challenges of climate change cannot be solved by individual actions but require the commitment of all. International cooperation, multilateral work and trust-building are therefore crucial to strengthening climate change governance and preventing situations that affect security.

Annex 28

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the United Nations

As a small country that is already affected by climate change without having significantly contributed to it, Cyprus is concerned about the lack of preparedness by the international community to address the existential challenges stemming from it. We would like the Security Council to include climate-related risk factors when considering conflict situations and to examine the following in respect of the specific conflict consequences and/or enhancers below.

With regard to the displacement of populations, the Security Council must be firmer in demanding the return of persons displaced by conflict as a general principle. Where displacement in a conflict situation results from a climate disaster that renders a place uninhabitable, the Council needs to engage with the State concerned and the United Nations country team to, first, ensure humanitarian assistance; secondly, move the displaced population to a safe area; and, thirdly, engage other States if viable solutions within the same State are not feasible.

Regarding climate refugees, in anticipation of cases where entire States become uninhabitable, an international instrument regarding climate refugees shall become inevitable. While such an instrument itself will not emerge from the Council, the latter should impress upon the membership the need to elaborate obligations for States that the Council must subsequently also contribute to upholding.

On the subject of climate migration as a security threat, as existing political, social or economic crises that are driving migration movements are expected to increase exponentially with climate change, so will the diminished ability of transit and destination countries to cope with the arrivals. This is in addition to the severe threat to the safety and security of migrants. Improving the lives of people in countries of origin is the only effective solution, and the Council is uniquely placed to do so, given that many countries of origin are conflict States.

With regard to tensions over resources, tensions are a certain consequence of water scarcity and food insecurity. As the regions most affected by these effects of climate change become more apparent, the Council could consider preventive action, including by requesting the Secretary-General to report on the potential for conflict and mandating the delivery of humanitarian assistance to defuse tensions until more permanent solutions can be found.

Regarding existing tools in the service of prevention, perhaps the most important tool at the disposal of the Council at present is its capacity to call on Member States to use mechanisms, including judicial ones, for the peaceful settlement of disputes arising from, or exacerbated by, climate change phenomena.

In terms of armed conflict and the protection of the environment, as a country with part of its territory under occupation, Cyprus is prevented from protecting the environment throughout its territory and is condemned to passively observing the environmental degradation caused by the occupying Power without any accountability. In such cases of international conflict, the Council has an indispensable role to play in ensuring that the State responsible respects the environment in territory where it exercises effective control.

As we drift further away from the 1.5°C target, we need to better prepare in anticipation of the inevitable consequences. Member States, along with the Security Council, should adopt a more comprehensive approach to security and assess nationally the risk of conflict due to climate change phenomena expected to afflict them specifically.

Annex 29

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement submitted by the Group of Friends on Climate and Security (see annex 20), and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

The Czech Republic thanks Prime Minister Johnson for convening this debate. We appreciate the United Kingdom's leadership on this important topic. In 2007, when the first-ever Security Council debate on climate and security took place (see S/PV.5663), it was chaired by former United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett.

The impacts of climate change on peace and security are becoming increasingly apparent. Water scarcity, food insecurity, livelihood losses, mass displacement and competition for resources, which are caused or exacerbated by climate change, increase the risk of insecurity and conflict. They can also slow down or hinder peacebuilding. In fragile and conflict-affected countries, they can cause negative feedback loops. A systematic integration of climate-related security risks into the Security Council's work is needed, including through regular reports by the Secretary-General and mainstreaming climate-related security risks in the Security Council's mandates, strategies and actions.

Addressing climate change-related risks to peace and security is a complex task. The guidance provided by the Climate Security Mechanism is valuable. The next step which should follow is the appointment of a United Nations special representative for climate and security, who would help improve coordination among United Nations entities. It is important to enhance the United Nations capacity to minimize security risks from climate change.

Climate change adaptation tools and practices constitute a crucial part of the humanitarian–development–security nexus. They strengthen the resilience of communities and countries against climate change-induced security risks. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 is particularly relevant in this context. The Framework's recommended approaches are included in the official development assistance of the Czech Republic. Their implementation enhances social cohesion of communities and supports peacebuilding.

The twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) will be the most important climate meeting since the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and we have to be ambitious regarding its outcomes. The current coronavirus disease pandemic is an opportunity to build greener, more sustainable and inclusive economies. Mitigation, adaptation and resilience building should stay high on the COP26 agenda because they contribute to reducing risk, including climate-related security risks.

The Czech Republic supports global cooperation and action targeting climate change and its impacts on security. The time is ripe to advance this agenda in the Security Council and translate this debate into a concrete action.

Annex 30

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Jeppe Kofod

I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Addressing climate-related security risks is key to sustaining peace. Allow us to suggest four key actions for Member States, the Security Council and the United Nations.

First, in countries affected by the dual burden of climate change and conflict, climate-related security risks must be part of national mitigation and adaptation policies and plans. Climate action should be conflict sensitive; and conflict interventions should be climate sensitive. This includes considering climate risks in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities and ensuring that post-conflict economic recovery is not based on unsustainable use and management of natural resources.

Secondly, the Security Council should continue to mandate and resource United Nations peace operations to consider climate-related security risks where relevant. This includes strengthened cooperation with civil society, weather organizations and regional and subregional actors on climate-sensitive analysis and early warning. We should build on the good work of the Climate Security Mechanism in this regard. We also hope to see closer engagement between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

Thirdly, a regular report by the Secretary-General on climate-related security risks could improve our ability to take action on climate-related security risks. There are also linkages with human rights, violent extremism, gender equality, displacement and irregular migration.

Finally, in support of the women and peace and security framework, we must advance women's full, equal and meaningful participation in defining and addressing climate-related risks. Women and girls play key roles in sustainable solutions in climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture, health and water. And they are often disproportionately affected by climate change and insecurity. Applying a gender-transformative approach to climate and security interventions is crucial.

In closing, climate change is the defining challenge of our time. Fragile contexts and vulnerable communities suffer the biggest impact, but addressing the problem is a collective responsibility. It requires cooperation, renewed multilateralism and solidarity.

Annex 31

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, Cristian Espinosa Cañizares

[Original: Spanish]

I wish to highlight the work done by the United Kingdom during its presidency of the Security Council for the month of February 2021. I also commend it for organizing this open debate on climate-related risks to peace and security, which is all the more timely in the context of the United Kingdom's presidency of the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Seven months have passed since the debate on climate and security (see S/2020/751), in which we recognized that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, considering that its adverse effects undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development.

Moreover, the international community has witnessed that impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as the abuse of and illegal trade in wildlife, can increase the transmission of zoonotic and infectious diseases, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

At the Security Council debate on 17 February (see S/2021/157), we had the opportunity to present our perspective on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international peace and security, during which we examined the degree to which resolution 2532 (2020), adopted by the Security Council seven months ago, had been implemented.

The adverse effects of climate change — the loss of biodiversity, desertification and drought, rising sea levels and increased intensity of natural disasters — generate social and economic problems, such as food insecurity, health system problems, unemployment and the lack of livelihoods, among others. The humanitarian consequences of climate change are also catastrophic, as they include the loss of millions of lives, the displacement of populations, job insecurity and exploitation and susceptibility to marginalization, which has a greater impact on the most vulnerable groups, including women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Climate change is a multiplier of threats to peace. In many cases, it undermines the social fabric and creates a breeding ground for violent extremism and organized crime.

At the same time, I would like to stress that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the main intergovernmental forum with the necessary experience and capabilities to negotiate the global response to climate change. Nonetheless, the Security Council's discussions on this matter are complementary to better understanding the links between climate change and international peace and security, so as to take advantage of the synergies among the various bodies of the United Nations system within their mandates.

The level of ambition needed to combat climate change requires increased provision of the means of implementation — adequate financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfers — to developing countries. I also reaffirm the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and the right to development.

Ecuador promotes prevention, capacity-building and resilience as essential components of disaster risk reduction, to ensure prevention and to build back better,

as established by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, with early warning mechanisms to address climate-related risks.

Ecuador also considers adaptation to climate change a priority issue that requires adequate financing under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Further examination of the links between climate change and peace and security is desirable and the contributions of national institutions and resident coordinators to that end will continue to be of great value.

In conclusion, I reiterate what my country stated in the Security Council debate, on 6 January, on fragile contexts (see S/2021/24). We agree that peace and development are mutually reinforcing. We must move forward now with a coordinated international response. It is the responsibility of the entire international community to confront and overcome the security risks posed by climate change.

Annex 32

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations

Allow me at the outset to express our appreciation for the initiative of the United Kingdom, as the President of the Security Council for the month of February.

We are steadfast in our commitment to addressing challenges posed by climate change and believe that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, as well as the relevant international conventions, especially the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement on Climate Change, remain the platforms with the original mandate and the heralds of necessary solutions to address the climate crisis in all its manifestations.

Egypt is fully cognizant of the severe impacts that climate change and environmental degradation have on human livelihood and our planet. It is worth noting that economic vulnerability and resource dependency are a key element in the link between climate change and sustainable livelihood in developing countries.

Climate change manifests itself, among other ways, through the increasing frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events, such as heat waves, unprecedented rainfall, thunderstorms and storm surge events caused by cyclones, typhoons or hurricanes, that in turn render countries, particularly developing countries, increasingly vulnerable. The impacts of climate change may be also witnessed in rising sea levels, desertification and biodiversity loss. Adaptation and mitigation efforts are therefore critical to sustainable development needs and to addressing the damage caused by such impacts.

Furthermore, the impacts of climate change and conflict risk compromise a multidimensional and intricate relation where practice has shown that climate change can often exacerbate risks related to energy production, food security, the availability of water, economic development and social inequalities. While appreciating the importance of the climate-security discourse that emphasizes the threat posed by climate change, we cannot neglect the economic security discourse and the threat that climate change poses to sustainable development.

Despite contributing the least to the global emissions, Africa, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, is the continent that has been and continues to be the most affected by climate change. Data has shown that climate change is having a growing impact on the continent, contributing to food insecurity and stress on water resources. The situation was further aggravated by the consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic. In this regard, Agenda 2063 of the African Union recognizes climate change as a major challenge to the development of the continent.

In this vein, Egypt is considered to be among the countries most affected by the consequences of climate change. Water scarcity is the most alarming crisis, which may lead to severe socioeconomic and security implications.

We remain fully committed to the global efforts to address the implications of climate change. We have worked on formulating the African Adaptation Initiative to represent the African contribution to the global efforts in adaptation. Also, Egypt and the United Kingdom co-chaired the adaptation and resilience track of the Climate Action Summit 2019 and the continuous efforts to enhance this track which culminated in the announcement of the establishment of the Adaptation Action Coalition by His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, at the Climate Adaptation Summit held in the Netherlands on 25 January.

Addressing adaptation needs of developing countries will enable preventative effects against climate risks that will safeguard development gains.

The international community has an important responsibility to bear in addressing the risks posed by climate change. A main avenue through which the international community can support addressing related risks is through the provision of sufficient means of implementation support to developing countries. Such support, in addition to being an obligation on developed countries under the UNFCCC, is critical to ensuring that developing countries are able to achieve adaptation and mitigation.

In that connection, recent estimates show that, between 2004 and 2011, Africa received only \$132 million from dedicated climate financing instruments to support adaptation. That is largely insufficient when considering Africa's need of more than \$40 billion a year until 2030. Without international support for means of implementation, including finance, the threats from climate change will continue to multiply.

In conclusion, we would like to stress the urgent need to address the challenges of climate change with a comprehensive approach that aims, at its core, to achieve the sustainable development of developing countries while ensuring their stability and prosperity.

Annex 33

Statement by the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations

[Original: Spanish]

El Salvador is located in one of the regions most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In 2020, while the Government was dealing with the coronavirus disease pandemic, it had to divert resources and focus on the national emergency due to the devastating effects of tropical storms Amanda, Cristobal and Iota, which affected some 30,000 families through flooding, and material losses that amounted to \$200 million. The loss of human lives, damage to infrastructure and increased disaster risk are effects that El Salvador has to deal with year after year.

El Salvador recognizes that climate change in itself does not cause violent conflict, but its effects have the potential to threaten livelihoods and create political and social instability and can even be a catalyst for the eruption of conflict.

The challenges are diverse and present complexities that require building on and consolidating climate change experience and capacities. In that regard, it is essential to establish participatory mechanisms that involve all sectors, including global governance institutions, in order to coordinate actions for climate-change adaptation and mitigation and their financing at all levels.

Greater coordination and consistency among the efforts of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, including the work of the United Nations system and its agencies, are also imperative. El Salvador has a strong interest in promoting a smoother exchange of information among all the actors of the Organization, which will enable us to take better decisions.

In the context of the work of the Organization, we call for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its Sustainable Development Goals, the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on peace, security and climate change and other relevant multilateral instruments, such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, including agreements on the reduction of global carbon emissions by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

The year 2021 will be a key year for responding to the effects of climate change. The twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Biodiversity Summit and the High-level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought, among other events, are spaces that will help us to translate our political will into concrete actions.

The challenges are specific to the region that faces them. El Salvador therefore believes that regional bodies have a fundamental role in that effort, for example, through the testing of disaster response, resilience and adaptation. We call on the States and organizations that are in a position to do so to invest resources and funding so that climate and sustainability policies can be implemented in all regions, particularly the most vulnerable ones. That includes the financing of the Green Climate Fund and the pledge to mobilize \$100 billion for climate action.

In terms of the Security Council's mechanisms for the maintenance of international peace and security, El Salvador emphasizes the fact presented by the Secretary-General that 7 of the 10 peacekeeping missions are located in countries that are most vulnerable to climate change. El Salvador therefore welcomes the fact that at least six peacekeeping missions have included climate change components.

We believe that that practice should be continued when renewing the mandates of all peace missions and special political missions. The periodic reports of those missions could include an analysis of the risks, consequences and humanitarian implications on the ground, among other aspects, to serve as an input and basis on which the missions can be strengthened in the future.

El Salvador expresses its concern that it is the most vulnerable sectors that are most exposed to violence and vulnerabilities to climate change. Children, young people and women are disproportionately affected by both conflict and the devastating effects of climate change. The Security Council should consider measures that take into account the particularities and needs of each sector on the ground.

We see climate action as an opportunity to strengthen the Security Council's cross-cutting agendas, such as those on the protection of civilians, women and peace and security and youth and peace and security. Women and young people must be part of the mechanisms that aim to find answers and address the effects of climate change.

Finally, El Salvador will continue to focus on turning analysis and discussion into action. We reiterate our call for the cooperation of all political stakeholders in shaping comprehensive responses so that Member States, the United Nations system, regional and subregional organizations and other relevant actors can better address climate-related security risks.

Annex 34

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations, Satyendra Prasad

I congratulate you, Mr. Minister, and the Government of the United Kingdom on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. I thank you for convening the most important Security Council debate of our time, that is, on the growing and expanding threats to international peace and security arising from the climate crisis.

On behalf of the Prime Minister of Fiji, the Honourable Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, I am pleased to offer remarks to the Security Council this morning. We associate ourselves with the statements delivered by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (annex 19); the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany on behalf of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security (annex 20); and the Permanent Representative of Tuvalu as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (annex 61).

This is the Security Council debate of our time. No one should be more conscious and aware of how speedily and how relentlessly climate crisis is having an impact on peace and conflicts across the world. The threat or multiple threats arising from the climate crisis are generating new conflicts globally and they are making existing conflicts more intractable. Each time that happens, it is not the Security Council alone but the whole of the United Nations system that bears some responsibility.

The security impacts and consequences of climate crisis on small island developing States across the blue Pacific are growing. They are growing dangerously, and they demand a proportionate urgency in the engagement by the Security Council.

As I address the Security Council today, the Fijian Government, its disaster response agencies and its navy and military are working hand in hand with the United Nations, repairing homes, rebuilding livelihoods and restoring services to communities across the Fijian islands that are recovering from Tropical Cyclone Ana, which struck Fiji only two weeks ago. One may say that is normal for a country located in the South Pacific during its cyclone season. That would indeed be correct.

While the Fijian Government is working with the United Nations and its development partners in providing relief to the communities harmed by Tropical Cyclone Ana, they are also responding to communities and families recovering from the monster category 5 Tropical Cyclone Yasa, which struck the Fijian Islands only a month earlier. All communities and families were impacted by that cyclone. That is slightly less normal.

While the Fijian Government is working with its development partners on recovery from Tropical Cyclones Ana and Yasa, it is at the very same time working to support communities that were impacted by monster Tropical Cyclone Harold, which struck Fiji earlier in the year. That surely cannot be normal. Such devastation surely cannot be sustained year in and year out by any country. It most certainly cannot be sustained during a year in which the country also has to face the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

While that is the case in Fiji, the same is true for so many small island States. That is why we small island States are well represented at the Security Council debate this morning. The growing insecurity arising from the relentless assault of the climate crisis — from its catastrophic impacts to its slow onset impacts, such as longer periods of droughts and sea-level rise — demands the attention of the Security Council in a wholly new way.

Fiji's has proudly contributed to United Nations peacekeeping for more than 40 years. It has brought to United Nations peace operations years of accumulated expertise and insights into how the climate crisis fuels instability and how it generates conflicts and fuels tensions. Those are important skills to bring to United Nations peace operations. The Secretary-General has briefed the Security Council that a majority of United Nations peace operations are already located in regions facing severe climate stress. That is not coincidental; it is consequential. In all those cases, a clear result of climate stress, such as water scarcity and severe environmental degradation, are fuelling conflicts. In each of those cases, climate stress is making efforts to sustain peace more difficult.

The Security Council has been charged with the maintenance of peace in relations among countries. More frequently, with greater certainty and greater fury, climate stress and the climate crisis are impacting the stability of countries. Equally, climate stress is fuelling growing pressure on security and peace between countries.

Secretary-General Guterres commented that, while we tackle COVID-19, we cannot postpone climate action because the climate crisis is not on hold. Fiji and the Pacific Islands are at the forefront of the climate crisis. They live and experience the impacts, day in and day out.

There is growing pressure on the blue economy from the warming oceans, which is causing fish stocks to migrate to cooler waters, damaging our subsistence and harming our economy. More frequent disasters mean that the blue economy infrastructure of wharves, jetties, airstrips, boats and aquaculture investments are destroyed more frequently and need to be rebuilt more frequently.

The relocation of coastal communities presents the most startling of all challenges. In the past two weeks alone, elders of two villages on the island of Vanua Levu at the epicentre of the recent cyclones have asked Fiji's Prime Minister to relocate them. Cogea and Nabavatu villages will be relocated. How many more villages across Fiji and across the Pacific need to be relocated through no fault of theirs?

In addition to the burden of recovery from COVID-19 and the climate catastrophes, those countries must bear the cost of that relocation largely alone. Something must give.

The relocation of coastal communities adds pressure on urban areas and regions. The relocation of communities is always at the expense of the land and other rights locked in traditional customary practices.

The relocation of whole communities within the country and that of larger populations from other countries stare us in the face in the Pacific. Fiji has provided opportunities to Kiribati and Tuvalu, its neighbours, to relocate to Fiji, should that they wish to do so. That commitment stands.

Climate change-induced migration has become a necessary and legitimate reason for inter-State relocation. Such relocation must always be done with care. The Security Council needs access to a deeper understanding of how informal, and often criminal, networks are beginning to operate in that space because State practice and international law are failing climate-stressed communities that need to relocate.

Some States ask: why the Security Council? Why must that be an issue for the Security Council? The answer is self-evident. In all its aspects, climate stress in small island States of the Pacific has moved from being a threat multiplier to a peace and security challenge. That is why this Security Council debate is so important. I will also add that this debate is fundamental to the future of the Security Council and to the United Nations system as a whole.

We welcomed progress on the climate security mechanism. Fiji welcomes the Secretary-General's reporting on security aspects of climate stress.

Fiji joins its colleagues this morning in seeking to mainstream the security aspects of climate stress in all peace operations. Fiji joins Member States in seeking a unified United Nations response to mainstreaming peace and security perspectives in all development investments in highly climate-vulnerable countries. Fiji joins colleagues in seeking a substantial increase in the depth of reporting to the Security Council and all the other organs of the peace and security consequences of climate change.

For many countries, the peace and security consequences of climate stress may be considerations for the near future. For Fiji and the small island States of the Pacific, they are considerations for today. One needs only to reach out to the United Nations country teams in the countries that have been continuously in mission mode for nearly two months, assessing, healing and consoling one community after another as they try to look with hope to a better future from the ruins of everything that they have had for years and decades.

That is why I said that this is the most important Security Council debate of our time. We expect a Security Council response that is befitting of the times and that gives hope to countries and communities across the world, where peace and security are now so fundamentally and relentlessly threatened by the climate crisis.

Annex 35

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations

I wish to thank the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing today's high-level open debate and for placing the critical issue of climate and security high on the Security Council's agenda. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the briefers for their inputs on the matter.

Climate-related risks to international peace and security are real and pressing. While climate change poses a threat to international peace and security at large, its immediate consequences are most strongly felt by coastal communities and small island States, who already face the grim reality of relocating their populations away from their homes due to sea-level rise and land degradation. At the same time, climate change hits hardest countries in fragile or conflict-affected situations, leading to competition over scarce natural resources, mass displacements, undermined societal cohesion and radicalization.

The scope of climate change is complex and wide-ranging, thus so must be our response. The ongoing coronavirus disease emergency has made crystal clear to the entire world that reducing system-wide solutions to unilateral actions is futile and causes further damage. In this context, we welcome the Security Council's increased commitment to engaging with the climate-related security issues in recent years, including through integrating climate-related security analysis into its peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

We think that a preventive approach must be given priority in shaping the Security Council's climate agenda. For prevention to be effective, the Council must be fully informed of climate-related security risks on a global scale. In this regard, we expect that the recently established Informal Expert Group of the Security Council on Climate and Security, together with the Climate Security Mechanism, formed in 2018, will substantially improve the information and analytical capacities of the Council concerning the peace and security implications of climate change.

Secondly, we must accelerate collective action to reduce global emissions, strengthen adaptation to climate impacts and support a green and resilient recovery. All of the above-mentioned goals are embedded in the existing multilateral instruments already at our disposal. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are mutually reinforcing multilateral instruments for preventing and addressing climate change. In this context, we regard the forthcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC as a critical juncture for global climate action.

Lastly, States Members of the United Nations must step up their commitments at the national level. With this aim, Georgia has prioritized Sustainable Development Goal 13 at the national level and updated its nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. According to the updated NDC, we have undertaken the commitment to limit by 2030 our total greenhouse-gas emissions to 50-57 per cent as compared to their 1990 levels. Moreover, to upscale climate governance in the country and underpin the implementation of the Paris Agreement, in 2020 we established the multidisciplinary Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change. In addition, last year Georgia also deposited an instrument of acceptance of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our appreciation for the Security Council's increased attention to the climate-security nexus and reaffirm Georgia's commitment to multilateral efforts to prevent and address climate-related security risks.

Annex 36

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Nikolaos-Georgios Dendias

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, a complex and multidimensional threat that worsens social, economic and environmental pressures. Moreover, acting as threat multiplier, it can affect peace, stability and security, increasing the risk of hunger and poverty.

Indeed, its effects are no longer a distant eventuality, but a present reality. Climatic changes are scaling up the frequency and impact of extreme weather events, which will disrupt the lives of millions of people, potentially leading to local resource conflicts and displacement.

In Greece, and throughout the Mediterranean, catastrophic forest fires, diminishing water resources, progressively prolonged seasonal droughts and floods pose a serious threat to sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

Clearly, no country is immune to the direct and indirect consequences of climate change. Therefore, enhanced multilateral cooperation is essential to address them, to promote mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and to increase the resilience of our natural and socioeconomic systems.

Raising climate ambition and intensifying climate action are now more necessary than ever.

Greece, looking forward to the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Glasgow later this year, aims, *inter alia*, to phase out all lignite power plants by 2028, to significantly increase its use of renewable energy sources and to achieve, by 2030, a 56-per cent reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions from 2005 levels. In this context, considering the full implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change by all to be essential, we warmly welcome the decision by the Biden Administration to rejoin that important Agreement. Greece fully supports the European Union's ambitious 2030 climate target and the goal of climate neutrality by 2050.

Since climate and security challenges are cross-cutting, a holistic approach is necessary to address their dimensions at the same time. This approach is about integrating and combining actions and policies on climate, security and development, in order to ensure the best possible outcome, delivered on multiple levels. The United Nations should play a central role in this regard.

Furthermore, we need to upgrade our knowledge base, which will lead to improved risk assessment and more effective field-level policies. At the same time, climate-security concerns have to be integrated into early-warning and conflict-prevention systems for more effective prevention of crises in the future.

If we fail to reduce emissions and build our capacity to cope, the impact of climate change will become more acute and lead to insecurity and instability. By investing in resilience and adaptation efforts along with mitigation and by explicitly linking climate action today with a more secure tomorrow, we can strengthen our response to climate change while ensuring a safer and more peaceful and prosperous future for people and our planet.

Annex 37

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations

Guatemala would like to thank the United Kingdom, as President of the Security Council during the month of February, for having convened this high-level open video-teleconference on “Maintenance of international peace and security: climate and security”, as well as to thank all the briefers for their presentations.

Guatemala welcomes the holding of this high-level open video-teleconference, taking into account that climate change is impacting the most vulnerable countries more than ever. During the past year, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been accompanied by many other highly destructive environmental events that represent existential threats, aggravating loss of life and livelihoods, and damage to natural and cultural heritage. Therefore, it is necessary that the Organization take a multipronged approach to address this issue.

We reaffirm that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change remains the primary body addressing climate change and that such United Nations organs as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must continue playing their important roles. The international environmental agreements provide the legal basis creating the platform to gather representative participation and establish financing funds to address the problem. In our view, it is urgent to advance to their full operationalization.

As an international community, we must fulfil our commitments to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions. However, the effects of climate change would remain, which is why it is urgent to give a strong focus to the adaptation agenda and to enhance resilience. To tackle this phenomenon, it is necessary to take timely, appropriate and sustained measures, observing the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, where the entire population is involved, as well as all institutions, in accordance with their respective mandates.

Climate perspectives need to be comprehensively incorporated into the peace and security pillar of the United Nations. Due to its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should integrate climate-security assessments in all mandated reports of situations on its agenda and be able to systematically analyse weather forecasts, identify vulnerabilities and determine risks with the help of regional and national climate outlooks and strong early-warning systems.

Taking into consideration experience in the field alone, climate change does not cause violent conflict. However, it does create major stress, especially in fragile situations, where Governments have limited means to help their populations to adapt. Risks associated with climate change can combine with and exacerbate risks of violence through factors such as food insecurity, water scarcity, economic shocks and migration.

Conflict prevention needs a long-term perspective and requires that action be taken on risks before they translate into crises. It is important to provide the necessary human and financial resources to prevent conflict. Building resilience and supporting adaptation can help prevent conflict risks and support peacebuilding and stability.

In this regard, we reiterate our position that the main effort must be in prevention and not in reaction. We strongly support the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and its integrated approach. We consider it important to strengthen the environmental actions within the activities of the Commission, ensuring that they are

sensitive to environmental social conflict and to humanitarian needs, such as food insecurity and migration flows, as well as deliver interventions respecting natural resources. Its work can also contribute to enhancing adaptation efforts, through the exchange of information, good practices, experiences and lessons learned; the strengthening of institutional arrangements; the strengthening of scientific knowledge; and increasing the effectiveness and durability of adaptation measures.

Finally, it is clear that, between climate change and security, there is an intrinsically symbiotic relationship — each threat exacerbates the other. Even when environmental degradation, climate change and biodiversity loss may contribute to the generation of conflict, they may also have an important role in its resolution. Climate action and sustainable development provide incomparable opportunities to build more equitable, resilient and peaceful societies.

Annex 38

Statement by the International Committee of the Red Cross

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) appreciates today's timely debate, held at the initiative of the United Kingdom's presidency and chaired by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Last September, ICRC President Peter Maurer briefed the Security Council under the presidency of the Niger on the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation on peace and security (see S/2020/929). He told the Council that many resilient communities in some of the ICRC's largest operations now walk a "tightrope of survival" — facing the cumulative pressure of armed conflict, climate change, environmental degradation and displacement. Today, the continuing coronavirus disease pandemic has added another layer to the challenges facing conflict-affected communities.

People affected by armed conflict are disproportionately impacted by climate shocks and environmental degradation. This includes the 66 million people the ICRC estimates are currently living outside of regular governance systems, in areas controlled by non-State armed groups. Conflicts sharply increase the fragility of the institutions, essential services, infrastructure and governance that are critical for strengthening people's resilience to a changing climate and environment.

We must adapt. On this point, we would like to share three observations and recommendations.

Efforts to develop responses that meet the needs of the most vulnerable must go beyond hard security measures and encompass broader human security, such as the impacts from combined conflict, climate and environmental shocks on people's livelihoods and access to food, water and essential services. When discussing the impact of climate change on armed conflict, vulnerability and risk, having a broad understanding of the consequences of a changing climate on our collective security is key.

To be effective, adaptation and resilience efforts for many fragile States must be conflict-sensitive. Greater investment in preventative and anticipatory action in fragile States could ultimately limit the combined humanitarian consequences of climate change and armed conflict. For now, climate action is particularly weak in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

Armed conflict often harms the natural environment, which further limits or hampers resilience and adaptation to climate change. Greater respect for international humanitarian law can limit environmental degradation, and thus reduce the harm and the risks conflict-affected communities are exposed to, including because of climate change.

Annex 39

Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of Indonesia to the United Nations, Mohammad K. Koba

We thank the United Kingdom for convening this important open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and all the briefers for their insights.

Climate change is a pressing risk to all of us. As President Joko Widodo conveyed at the Climate Adaptation Summit last month, archipelagic and island nations, such as Indonesia, are particularly vulnerable. Rising sea levels, ocean acidification and extreme weather events have caused socioeconomic distress to people. Climate-induced hardships and disasters can serve as multipliers, which aggravate and prolong conflicts.

On this note, my delegation wishes to highlight three pertinent points.

First, the impact of climate change on security is highly contextual, but what is clear is that changing climate exacerbates disaster risk. Different communities are affected in different ways by climate-related risks. A localized set of factors may come into play. These include resource management, economic inequality, and the availability of resources. Capacity to conduct evidence-based analysis, taking into account the local context as well as the latest climate information, is essential, as well as capacity to cope with the changing environment. Hence, adaptation needs to be put on par with mitigation. This will ensure a comprehensive approach and understanding in developing a workable and effective response, which needs to be tailored and context-specific, and takes into account the close interlinkages between climate and disasters.

Secondly, strengthening synergistic, coherent and coordinated action at all levels is crucial. The multidimensional and complex nature of the climate-related impacts on security and peacebuilding warrant a whole of United Nations approach. Security Council work needs to be mutually reinforcing, while avoiding any duplications, with existing streams of work on climate in the United Nations system.

In this context, we must ensure effective implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, scientific work conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the World Meteorological Organization, as well as other relevant processes that create co-benefits for climate, disaster risk reduction and the maintenance of peace and security. An enhanced and genuine global partnership is crucial. The capacity of affected countries must be supported, both in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate-related security risks.

In the spirit of not reinventing the wheel, we need to maximize the role of the Climate Security Mechanism in providing timely assessment of climate-related security risks and their management strategy.

Thirdly, we must translate words into action, ambition into implementation. It is our hope that discussion and consideration regarding climate-related risks can lead to concrete actions, in both adaptation and mitigation. Therefore, parties need to meet their common but differentiated responsibilities under the Paris Agreement. The international community needs to continue supporting countries in implementing their nationally determined contributions through adequate means of implementation.

We must support robust, fair and effective functioning of market and non-market mechanisms, such as REDD+. This includes ensuring certainty for participating nations on the results-based arrangements.

We also need to support affected countries in enhancing the capacities of national and local authorities. This can be crucial in preventing existing vulnerabilities from escalating into conflict.

Finally, we extend our support to the United Kingdom as host of the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Glasgow, this coming November. As countries are grappling with the multidimensional impacts of the coronavirus disease, the Conference must be able to advance effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, while ensuring inclusive global recovery. The Conference must thus lead to genuine global partnership, including the fulfilment of their climate financial commitments by developed countries, and enhanced access to adaptation and mitigation technology for all.

Annex 40

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ishikane Kimihiro

I welcome this open debate on climate and security, chaired by His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, as a significant step on the way towards the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks.

Let me begin by sharing Japan's view on the linkage between climate change and conflict. Climate change has serious impacts, albeit indirectly, on peace and security. Climate-related natural disasters and environmental degradation are multipliers for existing risks, which exacerbate fragility, leading to conflict.

In Japan's view, however, it is crucial to look at climate change and fragility through a human-security lens. We must focus on people when analysing the impact of climate change on conflicts by paying close attention to the burden imposed on all segments of society, including women, youth and marginalized people. In short, our response must be people-centred, context-specific and comprehensive.

Adverse effects of climate change, ranging from heat waves and droughts to torrential rain and sea-level rise, are severely impacting people in the Sahel and posing existential threats to small island developing States. Faced with these and other serious consequences, ambitious measures for global decarbonization are required. Japan aims to realize net zero by 2050. We will announce an ambitious 2030 target by COP26.

In the context of peace and security, however, the immediate actions required are those related to adaptation and institution-building.

First, on adaptation to cope with climate-related disasters, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 serves as the most effective instrument to build communities' resilience. Japan has been supporting the efforts of small island developing States through the Japan-Caribbean Community framework and the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM). The ninth PALM is to be held this year.

Furthermore, to cope with climate-related land degradation in Africa, Japan has been supporting the efforts of African countries to strengthen climate resilience through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process. Under the African Initiative for Combating Desertification to Strengthen Resilience to Climate Change in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, launched at TICAD VI, held in Nairobi in 2016, Japan supports projects for sustainable forest management and integrated water-resource management, as well as measures to fight desertification and enhance agricultural productivity.

On climate finance, Japan has allocated about 50 per cent of its climate-related bilateral grant assistance to adaptation. Japan's commitment to providing public and private climate finance to developing countries amounting to ¥1.3 trillion (approximately \$11.8 billion) in 2020 is envisaged to be fulfilled.

Secondly, on institution-building, where national and local institutions are too weak to protect civilian populations, environmental degradation could become a driver of instability. Institutions and systems to deliver assistance and services to those in need would in turn strengthen people's trust towards the Government and contribute to sustaining peace.

The African continent bears severe impacts of climate change and is not always well prepared to manage and respond to climate-related risks to international peace

and security. Japan will continue supporting the efforts of African countries to build institutions under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa, launched at TICAD VII in 2019.

To conclude, I wish to emphasize that the United Nations must play a leading role in furthering international cooperation for robust action against all aspects of climate-related risks. Japan will be an active partner in this endeavour.

Annex 41

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Latvia to the United Nations

Latvia recognizes the inherent danger of climate change as a non-traditional threat to regional and international security. Climate change is steadily rising on the list of the most urgent threats to international peace and security and the Security Council must pay due attention.

The coronavirus disease pandemic should not serve as an excuse to divert attention or put off action. Instead, it should raise awareness of the interlinkages among warming climate, nature under stress and day-to-day existence as we know it, and recovery should be embraced as an opportunity to build back better and greener.

The best way to diminish the threats posed by climate-fragility risks is to rapidly work on reducing greenhouse-gas emissions globally. Latvia is committed to reaching climate neutrality by 2050 and welcomes commitments that are equally ambitious. It is of key importance for all countries to submit more ambitious climate targets in their new and updated nationally determined contributions as we gear up for the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow.

It is not coincidental that countries most affected by climate change are also more susceptible to conflicts and instability. Climate change amplifies existing vulnerabilities and risks reversing gains made over decades. Climate change and environmental degradation reinforce pressures on ecosystems and pose challenges to food and water security, which subsequently raises risks of displacement, hunger, poverty, violence and volatility of other socioeconomic circumstances.

Therefore, comprehensive policy planning and implementation with regard to increasing the adaptive capacities of countries play an essential role in minimizing risks associated with climate change, thereby also minimizing possibilities of conflict and instability. Preparing for the adverse effects of climate change and setting up infrastructure and other preparedness measures to tackle the inevitable risks will help countries in reducing their vulnerability.

Responses cannot be isolated. While setting ambitious national goals and taking urgent practical action are necessary, multilateral cooperation and efforts will define our ability to address climate change and its adverse effects on global security.

Latvia strongly believes that mitigation of and adaptation to climate change are a collective responsibility. Since 2021 is a decisive year for climate action, so it is a decisive year for the future of global security.

The Security Council needs to show greater leadership in addressing climate change more ambitiously and robustly. There are plenty of members on the Council alone whose countries suffer direct effects of climate change, and their experience could be used as a building block to mainstream climate and security in the Council's work. Furthermore, since climate change has broad horizontal impacts, integrating climate and security into the Council's agenda, including with regard to its conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, would allow a more focused and efficient approach to many thematic issues. The new Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security should power work towards more decisive Council action.

In practical terms, there are steps that can already be taken. For instance, the Council should look for ways to address and limit the ecological footprint left by United Nations missions and to strengthen partnerships with regional organizations and stakeholders.

We applaud the urgency that the Secretary-General has assigned to climate change, as well as individual and regional initiatives with regard to this issue. We

should keep adding instruments to address threats posed by climate change in the relevant United Nations initiatives. Latvia remains strongly committed to the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It provides the indispensable multilateral framework governing global climate action. In this regard, we commend the reprioritization and elevation of climate change and security by the newly appointed United States Administration, including its formal rejoining of the Paris Agreement.

Annex 42
Statement by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Amal Mudallali

We congratulate the United Kingdom on its assumption of the Security Council presidency this month and pay tribute to the sisterly country of Tunisia for its presidency the previous month.

The high-level attendance for this open debate reinforces our belief that climate change is, in the words of Sir David Attenborough, the “biggest threat to security that modern humans have ever faced”.

In this regard, we express our appreciation to the British Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, for presiding over this open debate, and to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, for his briefing to the Council, along with the other briefers.

In my country, already afflicted by an acute economic and social crisis, climate change has affected one of Lebanon’s ancient symbols, the iconic cedar tree that adorns our national flag and Lebanon’s national pride. The cedars, whereas the Bible mentions Solomon procuring them to build the temple in Jerusalem, are now victims of rising temperature and wild fires.

Climate change also hit Lebanon’s multisecular industry: winemaking. The hottest temperatures recorded last year in Lebanon and the continued decline in rainfall have taken a heavy toll on the winemakers’ work, threatening their livelihoods. This has of course been aggravated by the current situation and in particular as a result of the pandemic.

Drought in other parts of the region is also threatening lives, increasingly becoming a source of conflict over water resources, and adding to food insecurity. It is yet one of the many examples, all around the globe of the imminent threat posed by climate change.

The Security Council, entrusted with the maintenance of peace and security, should work towards ensuring that conflict prevention and peacebuilding approaches increasingly integrate climate considerations into their strategies. Achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is one of the most effective ways towards climate security.

The Security Council could also identify the areas at most risk from climate-related conflict through established cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to better prevent conflict.

There is a need for a more proactive approach in the areas of vulnerabilities and risk to avoid further damage. We know that resource scarcity is one of the main drivers of conflict, hence the need to build resilience and support adaptation through enhanced financing.

The underlying objective of increasing resilience is to ensure that peoples do not have to migrate to resource-rich areas due to the loss of livelihoods caused by climate events. Whether it is through climate-resilient crops to sustain food security or water management to ensure water availability through droughts, adaptation aims at protecting livelihoods, economies and infrastructure from foreseen climate impacts.

Nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans do not, as they currently stand, address these impacts of climate disasters as being enablers of enhanced conflict risk. National adaptation plans could therefore address a wider range of risks to adapt to and prepare for, including conflict risk. This will

be country- and region-specific, as not all nations have the same risk profile. For instance, in the Middle East, a water-scarce region, preparing to avoid conflict is heavily linked to food and water security and sustainability.

Climate change impacts vulnerable communities at an increased rate, especially women. There are global efforts to render climate action more gender responsive, especially when it comes to adaptive capacity.

The objective of gender responsiveness is to empower women and make them more resilient to shocks. Climate adaptation is therefore an opportunity to reduce women's vulnerabilities to conflict.

Today's debate occurs as the United Kingdom, in partnership with Italy, has taken up the presidency of the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), to be held at the end of this year, and almost five years after the signing, at United Nations Headquarters, of the Paris Agreement.

If COP26 will be another test for multilateralism, it will represent the last best hope, as said by the United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Secretary John Kerry. The Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, also concurred that this is a "make it or break it occasion" for our planet. Let us seize the moment and step up to our responsibility to make peace with planet Earth, to save humankind by saving it.

Annex 43

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations, Christian Wenaweser

I thank you, Mr. President, for bringing the pre-eminent systemic security issue of our time to the Security Council's attention. Liechtenstein appreciates the United Kingdom's long-standing commitment to addressing the links between climate and security, going back to April 2007 when it was the first to raise the topic in this body. This discussion also builds on recent Council open debates, notably those held by the Niger last September (S/2020/929) and Tunisia last month (S/2021/24). Addressing the climate and security nexus is a prerequisite for the Council to fulfil its mandate. Accordingly, the Council should draw from the entire United Nations system to create a policy that tackles climate security risks, including through preventive action.

The concept note (S/2021/155, annex) for this debate very effectively raises the complexities of the relationship between climate and security, including the role of climate impacts as a threat multiplier and the deleterious effect of conflict on the ability of States to adapt to climate change. Liechtenstein also appreciates the intention expressed in the concept note to address climate preventively. It is clear that climate impacts, such as desertification and dwindling water resources, are leading to violent conflict, as are secondary impacts, including increased involuntary migration, poverty, the loss of livelihoods and social tensions between farmers and herders.

However, the Security Council's engagement on climate and security would be significantly strengthened by moving beyond a hard security paradigm framed in terms of causes of and solutions to armed conflict, towards one framed in terms of human security. Seen through the lens of human security, it is just as valid to understand climate change itself as a cause of insecurity requiring a Council response. An understanding of climate insecurity as worthy of the Council's attention before those affected resort to or are affected by armed violence or conflict would indeed strengthen the United Kingdom's emphasis on conflict prevention and upstream action. The 2009 report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Climate change and its possible security implications" (A/64/350), which addresses the "interdependence between human vulnerability and national security", may be a useful starting point in this regard.

Liechtenstein continues to support the important innovation of the Informal Expert Group on climate and security. Building on this momentum, the Council should tap into the wide range of expertise across the United Nations system, such as the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs-United Nations Development Programme-United Nations Environment Programme Climate Security Mechanism. In addition, it should pursue a resolution on climate and security as a standalone topic, one that establishes a reporting mechanism that makes use of this considerable expertise. More systematic references to the impact of climate insecurity on situations on the Council's agenda, particularly those outside of the African continent, are necessary and long overdue.

But most importantly, Council members must urgently limit their own emissions. The five years since the Paris Agreement have been the hottest on record, and it is increasingly possible that the global average temperature will rise 1.5° C in the next five years at least temporarily, a threshold deemed the point of no return during the Paris negotiations. The members of the Council bear particular responsibility, given that a small number of its members combined are responsible for more than half of the world's CO₂ emissions. It is not sufficient for the Council to address the nexus between climate change and security when the emissions of

its members are themselves determinative of the scale of the security threat. More ambitious targets and stronger implementation within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is vital to this effort, including through nationally determined contributions

On this note, Liechtenstein welcomes the United States' decision to re-enter into the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and hopes that it will mark a new chapter both in the Council's engagement on climate change and in our collective multilateral response. Such engagement is badly needed. The present and future security of billions of people depends on Council members' willingness to avert climate disaster today.

Annex 44
**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Maldives,
Abdulla Shahid**

I thank you, honourable Prime Minister, for convening this very important open debate on climate and security in your capacity as the President of the Security Council for the month of February 2021. Let me also take this opportunity to warmly congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council who assumed their seats at the start of the year.

I also wholeheartedly agree and align with the statement delivered by Prime Minister Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States.

It has been almost 14 years since the Security Council held its first-ever debate on energy, security and climate, which was also organized by the United Kingdom (see S/PV.5663). On that day, I told the Council that climate change was not only an everyday fact of life for the Maldives, but an existential threat. Two years ago, I reminded the Council of the devastating consequences of climate change to the lives and livelihoods of millions of communities across the globe (see S/PV.8451). For countries like the Maldives, we cannot afford to wait while we disagree on which forum of the United Nations must address climate change. A sea-level rise of two meters would suffice to effectively submerge entire nations underwater, including my country. Today, I am concerned to still hear opposition regarding the role of the Security Council in addressing the security threats related to climate change.

There is no doubt that climate change is the ultimate threat multiplier. It is taking away our homes and territory. It is eroding our beaches and killing the corals that naturally protect our islands. It is taking away our livelihoods and our way of life, our culture and heritage. Climate adaptation is absolutely necessary to avoid potential risks to peace and security in the small island developing States. This is particularly relevant now, as climate impacts are exacerbated by the coronavirus disease pandemic and our fiscal resources have been drained in our response. We are in a never-ending battle against the raging elements, fighting for survival.

The same could be said about the situation in the Sahel region. Countries that are vulnerable to drought, that are undergoing crop failure, made worse by conflicts forms a complex web of factors that contribute to the likelihood of conflict and instability. These climate-induced risks to peace and security are also already manifesting in situations of conflict, increasing tensions and disrupting ongoing peacebuilding efforts.

In every such crisis, vulnerable groups face the brunt of the hardships. In the case of climate change also it is the same. It is indigenous women that are most impacted, with women and girls generally bearing a disproportionate burden. But women are also the change bearers in our societies, so an effective approach should be gender responsive and inclusive.

While we acknowledge that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary intergovernmental body dealing with climate change, we cannot turn a blind eye to the situation on the ground, which falls outside the scope of that instrument. The role of the Security Council and other United Nations bodies should complement the work of UNFCCC. Accordingly, the Security Council must make decisions and pass resolutions, being fully aware of the impacts of climate change on international security.

In this context, we welcome the progress that has been made in the Council on climate security risk assessments, including the establishment of the Informal

Expert Group on Climate and Security last year. During its inaugural meeting, which focused on recent developments in Somalia, there were useful recommendations made by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to guide the way forward.

Maldivians may be powerless in unilaterally preventing the adverse effects of climate change, but that does not mean we will simply accept our fate. In December, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced our intention to reach net-zero emissions by 2030 at the Climate Ambition Summit. We mean to lead by example. I am under no illusion that our ambitious targets and transformational actions will save us. Without your support, we cannot keep our heads above the water.

Everyone recognizes that associating climate-related risks with international peace and security is a complex and broad challenge. But for the Security Council to live up to its primary responsibility for international peace and security, it must solve difficult and complex issues.

In conclusion, let us do this for our children. I have a daughter and two sons. I want to leave them, and their children, a world that is habitable and a place that they can call home. It is my duty and responsibility to do so. If we cannot agree on the impacts of climate change on security, we might as well hand over the reins and stay home. We need to bring more young people on board and work with them. How can we continue to steal their futures through our inaction? Let us all join together to take decisive and meaningful action, before it is too late. If not for us, let us do it for our children.

Annex 45

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations

Malta thanks the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for organizing this timely discussion on climate-related risks to international peace and security and how to address these risks through mitigation and resilience building.

From extreme weather events to more slow-onset effects like sea-level rise and desertification, climate change can have devastating consequences which verge from loss of livelihoods to loss of entire territories and States and of basic needs, such as access to food and water. Climate change does not affect States in the same manner, but if unprepared, its consequences are severe enough to exacerbate instability and conflict.

That is precisely why the Security Council's engagement on climate and security issues is both desirable and necessary. Towards this aim, we appreciate the United Kingdom's long-standing efforts, and we welcome the United States' re-engagement in this area.

We cannot afford to be unprepared. Multilateral cooperation provides the best form of preparedness for all forms of conflict exacerbated by climate change. Presently, the tools we have at our disposal are often reactive and rely on complementary processes, such as disaster risk management and humanitarian assistance. We need to go beyond this and aim for a comprehensive resilience strategy. Prevention is the best form of preparedness. The best way to prevent climate change is through ambitious mitigation measures. Greater attention to mitigation will translate into less need for adaptation and better resilience.

We believe that such a strategy is best achieved through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs within themselves are tools to ensure resilience, together with mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In support of the Secretary-General's work on achieving further convergence between the SDGs and the international climate agenda, we should pursue policies that seek to encourage better regional cooperation, foster more coordinated United Nations responses and enhance coherence among the multiple strategies converging in the region.

Through its work on the SDGs, the United Nations can go a long way to encourage Governments to draw up national or regional action plans aiming at climate resilience. Building resilience requires investment, and this is where we can draw on existing mechanisms related to the SDGs and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to make a difference by encouraging investment in mitigation and adaptation in favour of a transition towards resilient societies.

Building resilience and supporting adaptation varies in form and extent from one region to another. Climate change does not affect States and regions in the same manner, therefore our decision-making needs to be informed through research and data to allow us to pursue a context-specific approach to climate-related security risks.

The United Nations system needs to create a comprehensive information basis for the Security Council on climate-related security risks, to fully integrate short and long-term climate and environmental risk factors in the assessment and management of threats to peace and security, and to draw on the expertise of the whole United Nations system in order to identify appropriate solutions.

Perhaps the most important element we cannot afford to lose sight of is the fact that humankind suffers irreparable harm when we fail to appreciate the impact

of environmental degradation upon human security and socioeconomic well-being and when we underestimate the need to safeguard the rights of the vulnerable in a just and equitable manner.

We cannot forget that climate and security risks affect the most vulnerable in a disproportionate manner. We need to ensure that no one is left behind, from the poorest developing countries to disadvantaged segments of the population, such as women and girls. Indeed women and peace and security is a priority area for Malta. Women need to be able to participate equally and have equal access to those tools that will allow them to contribute to resilient and peaceful societies.

For these reasons, Malta's intention is to pursue engagement on climate and security in the Security Council if we are successful in our Security Council bid. We wish to see a wider consensus on this subject, and we continue to advocate for an open dialogue within the Security Council with a view to fostering greater understanding and cooperation on climate and security issues.

Annex 46
Statement by the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations

[Original: French]

First of all, I would like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing today's Security Council open debate on the crucial issue of climate and security. This debate is an ideal opportunity to bring our messages to the United Nations and to the world, raise awareness on the security consequences of climate change, and recall that climate change is not only an environmental and economic policy issue, but also a major challenge to international peace and security.

Morocco aligns itself with the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security (annex 20). I would like to thank Germany for having placed this issue at the heart of its mandate in the Security Council in 2019 and 2020. Together, we advocate that the Security Council should take into account the link between climate and security in its decisions. The international community must act where climate change threatens peace and security, and it should do so before conflicts break out or escalate. The dimension of climate migrants is also important and must be taken into account in a more sustained way.

Morocco attaches particular importance to climate action at the national, Mediterranean and African levels. At the national level, Morocco has an ambitious policy to combat climate change and develop renewable energy sources. However, we live in a region characterized by the interdependent link between climate change, security and sustainable development. The African continent, particularly our sister region of the Sahel, is unduly and disproportionately penalized by the consequences of global warming, to which it contributes almost nothing.

As a low emitter of greenhouse gases, with less than 4 per cent of global emissions, Africa is unfairly suffering the drastic effects of climate change. This is a situation that should be of concern to the world, the Security Council, and especially the countries of the African continent. Based on this observation, Morocco is fully committed to continuing the momentum that was triggered at the first African Action Summit, which was held in Marrakesh on the sidelines of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in favour of continental co-emergence around ambitious and concrete transnational projects.

In this regard, in accordance with the royal instructions of King Mohammed VI, Morocco provides significant financial and technical support, in the context of South-South cooperation, for the operationalization of the Congo Basin Climate Commission, chaired by the Republic of Congo; the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region, chaired by the Republic of the Niger; and the Africa Island States Climate Commission, chaired by the Republic of Seychelles.

If there is one promise to developing countries — and especially to those most vulnerable to global warming — that should finally be honoured, it is to help redress the imbalances caused by climate change. Accordingly, Morocco welcomes the commitment made by international partners at the first summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region, held in Niamey in February 2019, to finance the implementation of the Regional Priority Programme of the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region, in the amount of \$3.41 billion. This is an important step that should continue to provide the Commission with full bilateral, regional and international support for the implementation of the Climate Investment Plan for the whole region.

Furthermore, as a founding partner country of the Sahel Regional Commission and especially as a supportive African member of the region, the Kingdom of Morocco is firmly committed to supporting the actions of the Commission by taking charge of the feasibility studies so as to finalize its Climate Investment Plan. A memorandum of understanding was signed in October 2020 in Rabat between the Climate Change Competence Centre and the Sahel Climate Commission, aiming in particular to support the Republic of the Niger in strengthening climate action in the Sahel region.

Climate change is a risk multiplier. It is occurring particularly in regions that are already fragile, and it threatens the stability of States and societies. Seemingly stable regions can also be confronted with turbulence related to climate change. Indeed, the impact on certain communities, such as those engaged in pastoralism, is already having disastrous consequences, particularly in Africa. The challenge to centuries-old ways of life disrupts the social climate of these populations and can lead to economic collapse, and eventually to radicalization and extremism.

In this context, the Security Council should continue to advocate an ambitious global climate policy. Similarly, in the interest of global security and stability, all States are called upon to strengthen their efforts to protect the climate and assist those countries most affected by climate change. As long as the international community's climate targets are not sufficient to reduce global warming to an acceptable level, the consequences of global warming will be on the foreign policy and security agenda.

Annex 47

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, Amrit Bahadur Rai

At the outset, I would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency for convening today's open debate on the important topic of climate and security. I also wish to thank the briefers for their insightful briefings.

The climate crisis has become an existential threat for all of humankind in this Anthropocene age. It is a global crisis. The fate of humankind is at stake.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has reminded us of our nexus with nature. Even during the pandemic, there has been no respite from the climate crisis. The sea level is rising, snow-capped mountains are melting, glaciers are retreating, and flood and drought are becoming widespread.

The hazardous and existential threats of climate change have long been established, particularly for countries in special situations such as least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. These countries are compelled to bear the brunt of the catastrophe disproportionately, as they have the least capacity to deal with the problems.

Climate change is also a threat multiplier and accelerant to instability, contributing to humanitarian and socioeconomic crisis, conflicts and forced migration. It triggers a security risk and poses serious challenges to international peace and stability.

To mitigate such risks, we must understand the interlinkages between climate and security. We must also realize that climate action is not only critical for the health of the planet but also for the safety and security of people. Climate action should therefore not be just an afterthought or an add-on to our policies; it must be at the core of our development efforts.

In this context, I wish to highlight the following points.

First, COVID-19 recovery and climate action should go hand in hand. Green recovery from COVID-19 can be a sustainable solution in eliminating climate-related risks.

Secondly, investing in adaptation and resilience strategies, particularly at the community level, is critical to conflict prevention. The role of new technologies in improving climate-related risk-forecasting is equally important.

Thirdly, while the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States are the countries least responsible for generating the climate crisis, they comprise the group of countries most vulnerable to the crisis. Special attention should therefore be given to address their vulnerabilities. Financing will be crucial to build climate resilience and net-zero economies. Nepal calls for simplified and accessible finance and technology transfer to countries in special situations.

Fourthly, as we mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the imperative to scale up our ambition is greater than ever. Nepal welcomes the decision of the United States to rejoin the Paris Agreement. We emphasize the effective implementation of the agreement and reiterate the need to accelerate our collective efforts aimed at achieving a cleaner and greener planet. We can no longer afford to delay climate action. We must make the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow a success.

Fifthly, the Security Council must lead by example both in maintaining international peace and security and in addressing climate-related security risks. Nepal calls for political will and commitment, particularly from the five permanent members of the Council and the large emitters, to raise ambition and address climate-related security challenges.

Finally, we cannot afford to underestimate climate-related security risk when we look at the increasing inequality and the ethnic tensions around the globe. The COP26 must incorporate the nexus between climate change and security as an integral part of its discussions.

This is not a time to retreat from our commitments. This is a time to follow the science and act more. This is a time to combat cynicism and complacency and address the multifaceted security challenges emanating from the climate crisis.

Annex 48

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations

As a Kingdom of four countries particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events, the Netherlands made climate and security a priority during its Security Council term in 2018. Since then, the security implications of climate change have become only more apparent. They require sustained attention, enhanced understanding and urgent action. Allow me to outline three ways forward.

First, we must urgently adapt our way of living to a new reality. Only by scaling up adaptation action can we build societies able to withstand the pressures of a rapidly changing climate.

In order to accelerate action, the Netherlands recently hosted the first-ever fully virtual Climate Adaptation Summit. I was proud to chair a session on adaptation solutions in Africa, a continent with unmatched potential for innovation and creative solutions. To help unlock this potential, the Netherlands is investing €100 million in the Drylands Sahel Programme. We also stepped up our investments in the Least Developed Countries Fund. We have done this because peaceful societies act on the needs of the most vulnerable, which brings me to my second point.

If we want to mitigate climate-security risk, we also need to address the intricate relationship between water, peace and security. This is why the Kingdom of the Netherlands has launched the Water, Peace and Security partnership, which develops tools to help identify water-related security risks and enable communities to take early action. Recently, for example, the Partnership worked with the International Organization for Migration in Iraq to produce a model-based analysis of water shortages in the central and southern parts of that country, including recommendations for addressing water crises, which brings me to my final point.

We need to integrate climate considerations into the work of the United Nations at every step by doing more to monitor the security implications of climate change, including through regular reporting from the Secretary-General; by further integrating climate-related security risks in the United Nations conflict-prevention strategy and early-warning tools, in part by giving the climate and security mechanism greater prominence; by enhancing training for United Nations personnel on peace and security missions, and on the humanitarian implications of climate change; and by mainstreaming climate change in peacebuilding, including in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council holds the key to a comprehensive multilateral response, and we urge its members to work towards a resolution that effectively enables this.

In closing, Mr. President, allow me to thank you for your leadership in this regard.

Annex 49

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, Tijjani Muhammad Bande

I thank the delegation of the United Kingdom in its presidency of the Security Council for this month for organizing today's timely debate on a subject that affects us in various dimensions worldwide. We thank the briefers for their insightful briefings.

Climate change constitutes an existential threat to societies across the globe. It is a risk multiplier for social unrest and conflict. The disruptive impact of climate change on livelihoods around the world, characterized by violent conflict, political instability, economic strife and looming food insecurity, threaten to reverse hard-won development gains.

The enormous challenges and risks posed by climate change therefore require joint action to significantly mitigate and where necessary end its negative impact, which has been felt in every aspect of our lives. Most notably, increasing temperatures, variable rainfall, rising sea levels with flooding, drought, desertification, land degradation, extreme weather conditions, diminishing freshwater resources and loss of biodiversity are depriving entire populations of their means of livelihood. In particular, environmental degradation greatly strains governance systems, especially in regions embroiled in existing competition over natural resources, territorial disputes and insurgencies that heighten tensions and insecurity, all of which is being experienced in such regions as the Sahel. These dynamics continue to threaten stability of the region and lead to forced migration or displacement from the area.

As a result of climate change, the Lake Chad Basin, previously a source of productivity, food security and wealth creation for citizens of eight African countries living around the Basin, has shrunk considerably from its original size. The region now continues to suffer from a severe humanitarian crisis that has triggered the migration of many residents away from the Lake in search of greener pastures. More worrisome for the region is the escalation by such armed groups as the Boko Haram terrorist group, whose activities are placing people local to the region, especially women and children, at a greater risk of recruitment, kidnapping and enslavement by these groups. The nature of insecurity and vulnerability of citizens in these parts largely necessitated the formation of the Multinational Joint Task Force, which provides a collaborative and regional response to the threat of terrorism in the region.

Natural disasters and conflicts continue to undermine efforts of developing countries and small island developing States to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change. My delegation believes that peacebuilding frameworks should be made to reflect the challenges of climate change that countries have to deal with increasingly frequently. This adjustment would undoubtedly boost efforts aimed at tackling the impacts of climate change.

Recharging Lake Chad has been the highest priority for the Government of Nigeria, and efforts aimed at creating solid partnerships are ongoing, in a bid to improve the living conditions and livelihoods of populations in the area and to further assist in addressing the environmental and security risks that have threatened the region over time. To this effect, the Government of Nigeria is developing a rehabilitation programme and finalizing the development of the Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan, which includes an interbasin water-transfer project estimated to cost \$55 billion.

In order to promote the impact of changing climate conditions, Nigeria has also embraced the issuance of green bonds as an innovative and alternative

source of funding for projects that would reduce emissions and provide the robust climate infrastructure needed for renewable energy, low-carbon transport, water infrastructure and sustainable agriculture.

The multidimensional effects of climate change and security require broader cooperation among States Members of the United Nations and United Nations specialized bodies to enhance the global resolve to address climate change, with its resultant implications for peace and security and the attendant humanitarian consequences.

Permit me to say that our response to climate change should not be any less strong in the field of sustainable development. Resolution 63/281, adopted on 3 June 2009 by the General Assembly, reaffirms that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the fundamental instrument to address the issue of climate change. It recognizes that the nature of climate change requires broader cooperation among Member States and calls upon the various United Nations bodies, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify efforts to address climate change.

My delegation firmly believes in the wake-up call of the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit of 23 September 2019 for a global focus given the worsening climate crisis and the need to forge new pathways to support the achievement of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Summit reinforced 1.5°C as the socially, economically, politically and scientifically safe limit to global warming by the end of this century.

Concrete steps need to be taken to mitigate the fast-declining health of our planet. Therefore, there is need for all leaders to step up their climate actions in line with the Security Council request. Nigeria's commitment to its obligation under the Paris Agreement is particularly enshrined in its nationally determined contribution, including the commitment to unconditionally reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent, as well as conditionally by 2030.

I want to reiterate my Government's commitment to relentlessly supporting, promoting and fulfilling all regional and international obligations to mitigate climate change in a collective effort that seeks to ensure the well-being of present and future generations.

Annex 50

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations

Poland commends the United Kingdom for convening this timely debate. We express our gratitude to the briefers for presenting their interesting perspectives.

Poland aligns itself with the statement submitted on behalf of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security (annex 20) and its call for action.

The security implications of climate change are far-reaching; hence, we strongly believe that addressing them is the Security Council's responsibility. We must make every effort to achieve tangible progress on this issue.

We are all well aware of how often the general fragility of some regions and vulnerability to climate change overlap. Last year, we continued to witness heat waves, droughts, food and water scarcity, floods and a decline in agricultural and pastoral areas, often leading to displacements. Those consequences of climate change can act as drivers of conflict and insecurity. They can also cause damage to the natural resources on which many post-conflict societies rely in their economic recovery.

Our response to climate change and climate-related security risks must be based on prevention, mitigation and adaptation. Cutting emissions in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Katowice Rulebook is essential. The European Union (EU) agreed on a new target to reduce emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030. We would like to see all major economies update their nationally determined contributions this year to match the current level of the EU ambition. If the entire Group of 20, which is responsible for 80 per cent of global emissions, were to be persuaded to enhance their targets, it could set the world on a quick path to achieving the below 2°C goal.

Adaptation strategies should be formulated and implemented at the local, national and regional levels. Poland continues to implement its national adaptation strategy, adopted in 2013, and has also developed adaptation strategies for its 44 largest cities. As the host of the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum, due to be held in Katowice in 2022, Poland showcases the role of cities in the global effort against climate change. We are ready and willing to share our experiences.

A strategic focus on delivering innovative and cross-cutting approaches is needed to address the links among climate change, security and sustaining peace. In that context, we highlight the importance of regular reporting by the Secretary-General on that nexus. We need to ensure that our stabilization and peacebuilding efforts are climate-sensitive. A stronger focus on preventing climate-related security risks and building resilience is needed. Adaptation plans, the collecting of information and data analysis and the establishment of early warning systems are crucial in that regard. United Nations peacekeeping operations should be equipped with the tools to conduct localized climate-risk assessments and deliver operational responses throughout all stages of a peace process. Poland supports strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission's advisory role on that matter.

Poland also commends the work of the climate security mechanism and the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security. We welcome the recent appointment of the first Environmental Security Adviser by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UN SOM), and we believe that that practice should be followed by other United Nations missions and operations in the affected areas. Moreover, it is crucial to ensure the broad dissemination of lessons learned by UNSOM in responding to the growing impact of climate-related security risks.

Climate change also requires a shift in our peacebuilding approaches and priorities. We need to enhance coordination among all relevant actors in the field and

systematically use climate data to inform early peacebuilding decisions that commit post-conflict countries to certain development pathways. Tailored, climate-sensitive training for all relevant United Nations personnel is key in that regard.

The protection and empowerment of people in vulnerable situations, such as women, young people and persons with disabilities, lie at the heart of Poland's concerns. The evidence proves that women are more likely than men to be affected by climate change. Therefore, adaptation initiatives should identify and address its gender-specific impacts, particularly in areas related to water, food security and agriculture. We also need to listen to the voices of young people, who have proved to be real agents of change. It is time to acknowledge their unique contribution to global climate action.

Now more than ever, we need to apply a coherent approach to advancing the sustaining peace agenda. As we join efforts to build back better, we need to maintain a special focus on addressing climate-related security risks and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

In conclusion, Poland would like to underscore the inevitable need to act in the spirit of multilateralism. Climate change knows no borders; thus, it poses an existential challenge to the international community as a whole.

Annex 51

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, Francisco Duarte Lopes

As a member of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security, Portugal wishes to align itself with the joint statement submitted on behalf of the Group (annex 20).

We welcome the fact that, in the context of the broader multilateral response to the existential threat of climate change, its impact on security as a risk multiplier is being addressed by the Security Council, which holds the primary responsibility for ensuring international peace and security. We hope that this debate will pave the way for a more systematic engagement of the Council on climate and security matters.

Mitigating the impact of climate on security, especially in contexts of fragility, will ultimately be achieved by tackling climate change itself. Climate change can only be fully addressed with the contribution of every country and by ensuring cooperation at the multilateral level.

Portugal is strongly committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 in the context of the EU's strategy for a climate-neutral economy in the same time frame. That is one of the guiding priorities of the current Portuguese presidency of the Council of the European Union.

This year will be decisive in our fight against climate change, and we must step up our efforts in preparation for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Rising sea levels, increased susceptibility to desertification, periods of drought and resource scarcity already have serious implications for populations in situations of vulnerability, possibly leading to migration, exacerbating tensions over diminishing resources and, in turn, fuelling conflict. Many of those effects are already being felt in the Sahel, in sub-Saharan Africa and in small island developing States.

It is crucial that peacebuilding efforts effectively contribute to strengthening countries' national resilience and capacity to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. The Security Council can empower special political missions and peacekeeping operations with adequate mandates, capacities and training to address the vulnerabilities exacerbated by climate change, thereby ensuring that the focus on climate and security is maintained throughout the whole scope of the peace continuum.

More broadly, we encourage the inclusion of the climate-security nexus in the horizontal agendas of the Council, with a particular focus on the women and peace and security and the youth and peace and security agendas. It is especially important that young people be given a voice when addressing the interlinkages between security and climate, as they will be the ones most affected by its consequences. It is also crucial that we continue to bolster women's participation in sustaining and maintaining peace as a goal in itself, as well as considering the specific impacts of climate change on women, who represent 80 per cent of people displaced by climate change.

We recognize the benefits of mechanisms such as the climate and security mechanism, which should be further strengthened in order to scale up its role in mobilizing knowledge and in contributing to its mainstreaming across the United Nations system. Data gathering and analysis are key to ensuring that the Security Council has authoritative information to develop tools and early warning capabilities so as to prevent the escalation of conflict. We also welcome the establishment of an Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security within the Council.

In addition, the analysis and awareness of climate-related security risks should be better integrated into the efforts of the United Nations and Member States towards preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding. For a more coherent approach, whereby the peace and security and development pillars of the United Nations work closer together, we must factor in the role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Taking advantage of the PBC's advisory role to the Security Council and of the welcome commitment of country-specific configurations to providing written advice in advance of Security Council discussions could also be a way to feed the climate and security nexus into the concrete discussions on peace and security.

Annex 52**Statement by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar,
Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi**

[Original: Arabic and English]

I thank the United Kingdom for convening today's open debate. I also thank the Security Council for its sustained commitment to addressing future threats to international peace and security posed by climate change. I would like to particularly thank His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, for taking the time to preside over this meeting and I thank him for his leadership. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, for his insightful briefing.

Extreme weather, natural disasters, climate change and other ecological challenges are contributing significantly to poverty, drought, food scarcity, health threats and displacement, especially in vulnerable States, least developed countries and small island States.

The impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic on national health systems worldwide and on the global economy serves as an important reminder of the presence of the wide range of threats to our collective security and of the urgent need for working together to address them.

Over the past years, Qatar has assumed its responsibilities as an active partner in the international community, working with the United Nations and other global partners to support developing and least developed countries, including small island developing States, in order to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change and prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

In December 2012, the State of Qatar hosted and actively participated in the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. At the September 2019 Climate Action Summit, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, stated: "The phenomenon of climate change is undoubtedly one of the serious challenges of our time." His Highness announced the State of Qatar's contribution of \$100 million for the support of small island developing States and least developed States to deal with climate change and its destructive effects.

Just recently, in October 2020, the Qatar Fund for Development and the Global Green Growth Institute signed a memorandum of understanding to work together to support small island developing States and least developed countries (LDCs) in achieving climate resilience and green growth, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Qatar will host the fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries from 23 to 27 January 2022. The Conference will adopt the Doha Programme of Action as the first plan of action on LDCs to be adopted since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Tackling climate change will be one of the core issues and will be predominantly featured during the Conference.

Qatar's institutions, together with experts from around the world, are triggering transformative change across the nation, the region and the world at large. The results are being shared with friends, partners and relevant stakeholders around the globe.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar will continue its cooperation to ensure that future generations can stay safe and healthy so that they can help to build a secure and sustainable future for themselves, their families and their societies. We look forward to continuing to build strong partnerships at home and abroad to fight this threat.

Annex 53

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations

It was back in April 2007 when the Security Council had its first open debate on the issue of climate security (see S/PV.5663). It was led by the United Kingdom, the President of the Security Council at the time. Today, the Republic of Korea would like to express its appreciation to the United Kingdom for its leadership on that agenda and for convening this important meeting once again.

Since its first open debate, the Security Council and States Members of the United Nations have broadened the understanding of the complex linkages between climate change and peace and security. It has been widely agreed that we need to address our changing climate to better protect the peace and security of the world and its people.

However, the climate crisis is ever intensifying. Indeed, the year 2020 was the hottest year on record, according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and we continue to witness the adverse impacts of climate change all around the world. The extreme weather events caused by climate change have triggered not only humanitarian consequences, but also regional insecurity in an increasing number of cases. We recognize that there are higher security risks in fragile areas where the response to climate change is not sufficient.

We commend the role of the Security Council on the issue of climate security, and would like to call for the further engagement of the Council under its full competence. In that regard, the Republic of Korea would like to highlight the following three points.

First, we cannot agree more that addressing climate change through mitigation and resilience-building in particular will be the preventive action to avoid the worst conflict risks. We need bold actions to limit the temperature rise to 1.5°C, as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change sets out. In that connection, President Moon Jae-in announced last October that the Republic of Korea aimed to achieve 2050 carbon neutrality, which is encouraged by the other major emitter countries that have announced similar commitments.

In that regard, the success of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), which will be hosted by the United Kingdom this year, will be all the more important, since climate stability is a necessary condition for global peace and security. For its part, the Republic of Korea will host the second Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G) summit in Seoul on 30 and 31 May. The P4G summit will serve as a multilateral platform to bolster enhanced climate action and a timely stepping stone for the success of COP26 by facilitating crucial political momentum leading up to the Conference of the Parties in Glasgow.

Secondly, the Republic of Korea would like to call for heightened United Nations system-wide action against climate change, including leadership by the Security Council as the main organ of the United Nations responsible for international peace and security.

In that respect, we welcome the continued engagement of the Security Council on the climate-related agenda, including through a number of resolutions and presidential statements and the establishment of the climate security mechanism and its initiatives. We also welcome the Secretary-General submitting a timely and comprehensive report to the Security Council regarding climate-related security risks.

For substantive actions, we can find a good example in the recently adopted Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/02, on international support to the Sahel region. It sets out closer cooperation between the relevant United Nations bodies and Member States, leading to more concrete actions. The Republic of Korea will continue to play an active and constructive role in the follow-up and implementation of the resolution.

As another step towards further tangible actions, the Republic of Korea launched the Peace Forest Initiative at the fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in 2019, which promotes peace and trust through collaboration on the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded land and forests in fragile and conflict-affected regions. We believe that such efforts can facilitate fruitful exchanges and increase economic cooperation in fragile regions, ultimately contributing to the alleviation of political tension.

Thirdly, we need to ensure better and greener recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). With it now being more than a year since the outbreak, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused devastating damage to our societies and economies. It is sad to see the most vulnerable communities and countries being hit the hardest, and we must be quick in helping people to overcome this crisis. However, our recovery should not cancel out our efforts to combat climate change or put us back to where we were before. Instead, we need a better and greener recovery plan to prevent future crises.

In that regard, the Republic of Korea is implementing the Korean Green New Deal, within the vision of 2050 carbon neutrality. It pursues a low-carbon and sustainable economy by investing in green sectors and creating new green jobs. That will ultimately put the Korean economy in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Republic of Korea also actively supports the efforts of the Global Green Growth Institute to help developing countries achieve low-carbon and sustainable energy transition. The Republic of Korea will share its experiences and lessons learned and cooperate with the rest of the world.

Climate change is increasingly becoming a significant driver of regional instability and is threatening global peace. No single country can cope with the challenges alone. Indeed, humankind and our planet are collectively vulnerable to such global threats and we must act in global solidarity in response. The Republic of Korea will continue to actively participate in international cooperation to prevent climate crises from further spiralling into threats to peace and security.

Annex 54

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations, Cosmos Richardson

Fourteen years ago, the United Kingdom brought the question of climate change and security before the Security Council for the first time in the Council's 62-year history (see S/PV.5663). Since then, Heads of State and Government, Ministers and diplomats alike have raised the critical importance of climate security risks in high-level open debates and informal meetings.

The world continues to grapple with the multidimensional implications associated with climate change, which range from increased vulnerability, instability and poverty, land and biodiversity loss, violent conflict and humanitarian crises to the increased intensity and frequency of natural disasters and threats to the very future of humankind itself. The unique and urgent security risks faced by small island developing States, such as Saint Lucia, have been made clear by the Chairs of the Caribbean Community and the Alliance of Small Island States.

Since its establishment, the Security Council has focused predominantly on issues of war, military activity and violent conflict. However, over the years the Council has evolved and expanded the scope of security topics, including a more encompassing concept of human security and the plight of women and children in conflict, thereby proving its capability as a dynamic and evolving organ. The debates over the years reflect the growing understanding that the security risks of climate change must be considered alongside nuclear, biological and chemical risks.

It is a matter of fact that climate change exacerbates, prolongs or contributes to the risk of future conflicts and instability. The effects of climate change do not occur in a vacuum; they interact with economic, social and political factors and they intensify pre-existing risks with a disastrous, threat-multiplier effect. While the climate-security connection remains complex, the Security Council, as the highest organ with the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, has to evolve to meet this moment and the challenges that exist.

Our current international context provides explicit evidence that climate change, sustainable development, peace and security are not mutually exclusive issues. It will therefore be necessary to address the multidimensional challenges through a thoughtful whole-of-United-Nations approach. Collaboration and inclusivity are essential. The establishment of complementarity across the mandates and work of the Security Council and other United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Environment Programme, would lend itself to a holistic approach that would bring together expertise in climate change, peace and security, sustainable development and humanitarian issues working together across the United Nations system.

The inclusion of that non-conventional security threat on the Council's agenda is a commendable start, but for those of us who do not have the luxury of time, as climate change continues to erode our very existence as nation States, a more fulfilling goal would require institutional and systematic change, because climate change will not wait for consensus. My delegation welcomes the increasing number of members of the Security Council who are committed to working to improve the Council's access to climate-related information and analysis in order to better enable the Council to assess the security implications of the impacts of climate change and support the relevant conflict-prevention measures.

My delegation commends the United Kingdom for bringing this critical issue before the Security Council once again and for joining other Council members to

convene the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security. We look to you, Mr. President, for continued support to champion within the Council the advancement of the recognition of the complex interrelations of climate change and security, their effects as an issue that cuts across the Council's agenda and the need to adapt institutional working methods in order to comprehend the challenges.

Annex 55
**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Slovakia,
Michal Mlynár**

I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate on addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security under the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security: climate and security”.

We are living through an extraordinarily difficult period in global history. The coronavirus disease reminds us that life is precarious and interconnected. Our world was already fragile. Violent conflict, humanitarian need and displacement increased over the past decade influenced and intensified by climate change. The interaction between climate change, loss of biodiversity and international security must absolutely become a key item on the conflict-prevention agenda. It is the only way to anticipate tomorrow’s threats and to help the most vulnerable countries.

Slovakia is a strong proponent of climate action, peace, human rights and the rule of law. That was reaffirmed by the Slovak President, Her Excellency Mr. Zuzana Čaputová, at the Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit in 2019. Let me emphasize her words:

“If we succeed in uniting on our climate action, we can generate a new sense of solidarity and common good. It can help to restore the international system, overcome divisions and bring new opportunities in the areas of peace and development.”

We have seen important progress over the past years. The analytical basis of the Security Council’s work on climate-related security risks has improved through the work of the climate security mechanism within the Secretariat. The mechanism should be further strengthened, as it brings the expertise from various parts of the United Nations system on conflict prevention, mediation, the sustainable management of natural resources, climate change, resilience and gender closer together.

Similarly, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture needs to be enabled to address climate-related risks, including those over diminishing natural resources. In that regard, the increase in water stress as a result of climate change is particularly pertinent, increasing the risk of conflict and undermining peacebuilding efforts. I would like to reaffirm Slovakia’s support for the Secretary-General’s reforms aimed at rendering United Nations peace operations a more effective tool in addressing the spoils of climate change and their consequences for global security.

Slovakia and the European Union (EU) remain strongly determined to implement their commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, including through the European Green Deal. We call on all partners to demonstrate the same determination on the road to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). As the world’s largest climate donor, much of the EU’s help is aimed at combining adaptation to global warming and interventions to improve the sustainable management of resources with the prevention of conflict.

We fully support the ambitions and plans, which will ensure that COP26 will be a success. We are convinced that building resilience and supporting adaptation to prevent conflict risks and support peacebuilding and stability should be essential. Therefore, we welcome the fact that COP26 prioritizes focusing on strengthening adaptation and resilience, particularly in climate-vulnerable regions. By building resilience, we can reduce risks, including climate-related security risks. Climate adaptation programmes and projects can contribute to peacebuilding, and peacebuilding can have positive impacts on climate adaptation measures.

We welcome the United States of America back into the Paris Agreement, including announced United States plans to set the country on a path to net-zero emissions by 2050, in a similar vein to the EU through the European Green Deal.

On 20 January, the Government of Slovakia adopted a document on the vision and strategy of Slovakia's development until 2030 — Slovakia 2030, which is an implementation document for the fulfilment of the national priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that document, Slovakia declares compliance with the European Green Deal based on the 2030 Agenda. The vision and strategy of Slovakia's development until 2030, Slovakia 2030, serve to reflect and specify the priorities of the 2030 Agenda and the European Green Deal in the specific conditions of Slovakia. As an integrated development strategy, it also frames public policies and development policies of local governments to ensure their coordination, synergy, stability and more efficient use of public resources.

Furthermore, I would like to mention the heightened vulnerability of women and girls to the impacts of climate and security. The United Nations Environment Programme, UN-Women, the United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs all report the close links among gender, climate and security and that women on the front lines of climate action are playing a vital role in conflict prevention and sustainable, inclusive peace. It remains vital to support local ownership, improving leadership and broadening inclusion in conflict and fragile settings, with special attention to gender and young people.

The United Nations should to the best of its ability lead in facilitating and coordinating global efforts on climate action, working with regional partners and other stakeholders, including non-State actors, such as businesses and local authorities, which play an increasingly important role in that field. Multilateralism is a key tool that can, and should, deliver on global solutions, including climate change. In that regard, Slovakia is fully committed to being a part of that collective responsibility.

Annex 56

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations

Slovenia welcomes the increased attention that the Security Council devotes to contemporary drivers of conflict, in particular the link between climate and security. We thank the United Kingdom for putting this topic on the agenda and for making this an open meeting.

The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are clearer and more widespread than ever. They act as a risk multiplier. We can choose to ignore them only at our own peril.

The year 2021 needs to be a year of ambition and action in addressing global climate emergency, including climate-related risks to international peace and security.

The climate emergency is a grave and increasing danger to stability and peace. Failure to consider the risks will undermine efforts of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and put vulnerable countries and social groups in a vicious cycle of conflict and deprivation.

We should not disregard environmental factors and questions of natural resources in peace processes. Conflict analyses have shown that this substantially raises the risks of recurrence of the conflict.

The majority of climate change impacts are reflected in the disruptions of the water circle, affecting each and every country. Scarcity and poor management of water resources deepen social inequalities. It can trigger social, economic and political instabilities. The growing and competing needs for water use are likely to enhance water-related security challenges. The coronavirus disease pandemic has exposed the existing vulnerabilities even further.

Responding to the questions, provided for this debate, Slovenia would like to share the following considerations.

In order to build resilience, our post-pandemic recovery must put in place climate-proof solutions, while our climate interventions need to be conflict-proof. A good example of resilience and adaptation efforts for prevention of conflicts is large-scale land restoration. It is a powerful adaptation measure. It can also bring together different groups of society in efforts to reach a common solution — to build stability, provide jobs and opportunities. The international community should strongly support such endeavours.

Competition over natural resources is one of the most common underlying sources of instability and conflict. Sustainable management of natural resources should be firmly embedded into the nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans, formulated in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. They should be drafted in an all-inclusive effort which also contributes to moderating conflicts by engaging marginalized groups, women and youth.

They should also take into account the fact that climate change effects are transboundary, as are many natural resources. The majority of the planet's freshwater resources cross international borders; therefore, transboundary cooperation is of utmost importance. Throughout history, active engagement in water cooperation has proven to be one of the most important factors in avoiding conflicts.

The previous Security Council thematic debates have helped build awareness of the climate-security nexus. They have provided the necessary exchange for further response and capacity-building. We should continue to include this perspective into debates on root causes of conflicts.

We also believe that the Security Council could strengthen its work on climate-security-development nexus. It should pay particular importance to water, the most important and irreplaceable natural resource. It could represent a model for a dynamic approach to conflict prevention and transformation, peacebuilding and resilience, supported by sustainable and inclusive development and regional cooperation.

Efforts to integrate climate change and security can also support the broader Security Council agenda on women, peace and security. Women and girls are most affected by climate change, but — if empowered by education, economic means and equal opportunities — can also be powerful agents of change. It is also crucial to address the digital divide.

In our view, the Security Council should continue addressing climate-related security risks through thematic events and debates, which include the broad United Nations membership. Slovenia would welcome such debates and actively participate in the process.

The Council should lead broad efforts to strengthen the information base on climate-related security risks. Climate-sensitive conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding interventions should be designed, thereby providing the capacity to act when climate-security risks occur.

Focus on adaptation and resilience building, especially at the community level, is critical to conflict prevention. Recent nomination of the United Nations Special Envoy for Climate Ambition and Solutions offers an opportunity to strengthen these dimensions.

Slovenia has been actively participating in the debates on climate and security at the United Nations and other international forums and will continue to do so in the future. Once again, let me underline our appreciation for being included in today's debate.

Annex 57
Statement by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations

South Africa is a long-standing champion of the need for an urgent multilateral response to human-induced climate change, in recognition of the existential threat that it poses for humankind, as well as the other species with which we share this beautiful planet.

South Africa has consistently called for a collective response to this urgent challenge in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which provides the forum for a multilateral solution to this challenge. The UNFCCC is guided by the principles of equity, differentiation of actions required by developed and developing countries, and the provision of support to all developing countries that require it.

South Africa looks forward to participating in the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the UNFCCC hosted by the United Kingdom in Glasgow later this year, where we are hopeful that further significant progress can be made in advancing an urgent, meaningful, multilateral solution to this challenge in line with UNFCCC principles. In this regard, we also welcome the United States' re-entry into the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and look forward to its renewed commitment to the multilateral process.

South Africa recognizes that climate change has the potential to drive conflicts in specific circumstances. We recognize that factors, such as extreme weather events, water scarcity and drought, food insecurity and desertification, which are thought to be caused or exacerbated by climate change, increase the risk of violent conflicts. In Africa, there is evidence to suggest that this is the case in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, as well as the Horn of Africa. In these instances, as with elsewhere, climatic pressures associated with human-induced climate change are threats or risk multipliers which escalate tensions and conflict, by placing additional or further strain on scarce resources.

We believe it is important to recognize, however, that climate change is first and foremost a sustainable development issue that has to be addressed through full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with support to Member States from multilateral bodies dedicated to effectively supporting all three legs of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental.

The key to addressing climate change is to secure international collaboration to take the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures and to ensure that all developing countries that require means of implementation support, or assistance in responding to loss and damage caused by climate change, receive such support. In so far as there are security implications to climate change, these are likewise best addressed through massively scaled-up, appropriate and accessible climate-adaptation and mitigation-related support to the affected countries.

The UNFCCC holds the primary mandate and capabilities to galvanize this type of action by the international community, particularly since it enjoys universal membership, operates by consensus and adheres to the Convention principles, including equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

The introduction of climate change as a thematic issue on the agenda of the Security Council risks, in our view, diffusing the importance of the UNFCCC process in addressing this global challenge, as well as detracting attention and resources from its essential work.

We also think that there are reasonable questions about when and on what scientific basis the Security Council would invoke climate change as a contributing factor to a specific conflict situation and where precisely the Security Council draws the line with respect to incorporating environmental issues into its agenda. Certainly, climate change is but one of several serious environmental challenges with potential peace and security implications and we need to guard against mandate creep in the Council or the Council outpacing its own resources and capacities.

We do not wish to downplay specific climate-related security risks, which the Security Council has progressively acknowledged in various outcomes over the years and which have received enhanced analytical capacity in the United Nations system, most notably in the Climate Security Mechanism, linking the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme. Where climate change is shown to be a clear contributing factor to a threat to international peace and security, we believe it could be appropriate for the Security Council to comment on this apparent link within the specific context of the countries which may be affected.

Our broader message, however, is that the international community needs to channel its resources effectively through the bodies in the United Nations system that are most fit for a particular purpose. We nevertheless welcome the opportunity of this meeting to explore proposals to enhance the capacity of the Security Council to better respond, as appropriate, to climate-related security risks.

In conclusion, we would urge, as always, that these risks be considered in the context of close partnerships with regional organizations, including the African Union, and that we seek creative, cost-effective means of utilizing existing resources and avoid generating new mechanisms that could entail significant costs to and additional burdens on already strained operations.

Annex 58
Statement by the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations, Agustín Santos Maraver

[Original: Spanish]

My statement is aligned with that delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany on behalf of the Group of Friends of Climate and Security (annex 20).

I should like to commend the British presidency of the Security Council for having organized this high-level open debate, which, once again, brings before the Council the implications of climate change for global peace and security. I thank Prime Minister Boris Johnson for his presence and remarks, and assure him he can count on Spain's full commitment towards the success of the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. I also thank the Secretary-General and all other speakers for their statements.

It is increasingly clear that climate change impacts the lives of all people and threatens the very existence of some States Members of the United Nations. Science constantly reminds us of this and empirical evidence shows us, with increasing frequency and virulence, the impacts of global warming, in the forms of social destabilization and loss of human life and of economic resources.

The health, economic and social crisis caused by the coronavirus-disease pandemic has only exacerbated these impacts and, therefore, the risk of instability and conflict, precisely in the most vulnerable regions and population groups. Spain is convinced that a sustainable and resilient recovery, based on a just and inclusive ecological transition, is the best recipe to face the crisis. But furthermore, a policy of prevention must allow us to anticipate risks, ensuring, for example, that the replacement of fossil fuels by renewables is accompanied by evaluation, information and analysis measures as to the impacts on peace and security.

For these reasons, climate action cannot be confined to the domain of sustainable development; it is essential that the Council address the effects of climate change on international security.

Spain is a country especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, especially desertification. Not only have we set the objective of climate neutrality, we have also adopted ambitious domestic legislation in that regard, in fulfilment of our commitments. Our second, recently approved National Adaptation Plan incorporates the aspects of peace and security and cross-border cooperation, and our National Security Strategy addresses climate. Finally, building a more resilient and green planet is one of the four foundations of our new Foreign Policy Strategy.

On the other hand, global warming and environmental degradation have a negative impact on the security of people in all circumstances, but even more so in the case of armed conflicts. In many cases, it is the very origin of conflicts. For this reason, Spain has introduced a cross-cutting climate and environmental component across its humanitarian and development activities. The Shire Alliance project, a public-private partnership involving private companies, the academic sector and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, has supplied electricity and water to the Adi Harush refugee camp in Ethiopia since 2016.

The combination of the climate and health crises has also seriously compromised food security and access to drinking water for millions of particularly vulnerable people. Aware of the importance to hygiene of access to drinking water, especially for women, Spain has therefore joined the Water and Sanitation for All alliance.

We cannot forget, in our climate action, the necessary special attention to the gender dimension and the empowerment of women. The women and peace and security agenda must also incorporate the heretofore-absent climate dimension.

In conclusion, I reiterate the imperative and increasingly urgent need for the Council to incorporate the impacts of climate change into its activities. International peace and security cannot be guaranteed without addressing the greatest threat facing humanity.

Annex 59

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, Peter Mohan Maithri Pieris

May I first of all thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom for facilitating this very important discussion. It is common ground that we human beings are exploiting the resources of the planet in a way that is unacceptable. We appear to present a timid response to the clearing of forests, filling of wetlands, serious interference with the biodiversity, unimaginable exploitation of the planet's resource, melting of the ice caps and extinction of the fauna and flora, all leading to one thing, and that is climate change.

We do all this without appreciating the fact that we are at war with our own planet — a war in which we are surely on the losing side. It has virtually become common rhetoric, almost to the point of complacency, that we, as a matter of fact, breathe polluted air, consume food that is toxic, consume water that is contaminated, and accept the rising sea levels as a fact of life. We even accept extreme climate change with an interesting expression: an ice bomb or a winter bomb.

Interestingly, it seems that we are leaving a legacy of a severely wounded planet to our future generations. It must be appreciated that environmental impact is not merely the loss of beautiful landscape but what it means is that the basic requirements for sustaining life are, on a continuous basis, being severely compromised.

Today, as we struggle with the coronavirus disease, it is clear that non-traditional security threats, such as climate change, are becoming greater in scope and magnitude in the twenty-first century. In this context, Sri Lanka welcomes the convening of this timely open debate to discuss the role of the Security Council, Member States and the United Nations in addressing future threats to international peace and security posed by climate change.

Before discussing the role of global climate governance, with relevance to the international legal framework, let me refer to a quote by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who captured the issue as far back in 2009, very succinctly, when he said:

“Just as our banking sector is struggling with its debts — and paradoxically also facing calls for a return to so-called old-fashioned’, traditional banking — so Nature’s life-support systems are failing to cope with the debts we have built up there too. If we do not face up to this, then Nature, the biggest bank of all, could go bust.”

I see these as very timely observations.

We are aware that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) sets out binding limits on greenhouse-gas emissions and that the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 has binding obligations for developed countries to control greenhouse-gas emissions. This was followed by the 2010 Climate Change Conference, which decided that global warming should be limited to less than 2°C. And in 2015, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was adopted, gearing emissions reductions from 2020 onwards towards a lower-end target of 1.5°C.

It is important also to remember that the Paris Agreement has a bottom-up structure, in contrast to top-down international law treaties, with internationally set standards and targets for countries to achieve. It is heartening to note that, unlike the Kyoto Protocol, which sets targets and has legal force, the Paris Agreement depends on consensus-building and voluntariness in achieving targets that are decided nationally. It is further heartening to recall that in 2015, developed countries

committed themselves to about \$100 billion annually in climate finance and further agreed to maintain it at a level of \$100 billion a year until the year 2025.

However, it is perhaps regrettable to note that a large number of the major developed, industrialized nations are not living up to their pledges and have not met their emissions-reduction targets, and that in any event they have not been able to keep the rise of global temperatures to well below 2°C. It is said that the Earth has never in its history had a quasi-stable state around 2°C warmer than the pre-industrial period, and it has been suggested there is a substantial risk that the system itself will want to continue warming because of these processes even if we stop emissions.

It is therefore important to appreciate that simply reducing emissions will not suffice, but we will have to do much more. As climate expert and former United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration scientist James Hanson has observed, most of the agreements, unfortunately, consist of promises or aims and not commitments.

As an island country that has faced the adverse impact of climate change, Sri Lanka, having ratified the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC, advocates that climate-related agreements need to be respected and upheld in accordance with countries' differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities. This, I say, is pivotal to ensuring comprehensive climate security and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The consequences of climate change, such as temperature rise, rainfall variability and sea-level rise, are critically affecting almost all economic sectors globally. Occurrences of natural disasters due to extreme weather conditions, such as prolonged droughts, flash floods and landslides, deprive the global community of lives and livelihoods. Sri Lanka believes that building the resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems to the effects of climate change within a broader framework of sustainable development should be our priority.

Recognizing this responsibility, the Government of Sri Lanka has launched a National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change Impacts in Sri Lanka, which has identified agriculture, fisheries, water, human health, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity, infrastructure and human settlements as the most vulnerable sectors to the adverse effects of climate change. It provides opportunities for stakeholders to develop policies for strengthening cooperation; for facilitating institution-building, resource-mobilization and technology-development and transfer; for promoting awareness; and for capacity-building to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities in several areas and sectors in the country.

In implementing the provisions of national adaptation plans to climate change, as in the case of Sri Lanka, external support for further strengthening and action is of great significance. As such, Sri Lanka calls on the United Nations system for the provision of assistance to developing countries, in combating the challenges, including finance, technology transfer and capacity-building. This would, in my respectful view, be a starting point for preventing climate-related security risks.

Our fight against climate change and consolidating security should be a collective effort, in partnership with Governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, youth, women and indigenous communities. While commending the efforts of the Security Council in this endeavour, Sri Lanka looks forward to the 26th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, to be held in Glasgow this year, to unite the globe to tackle climate change.

I wish the United Kingdom every success during its term in office leading the Security Council.

Annex 60
Statement by the Head of the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Ignazio Cassis

[Original: English and French]

I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate. The consequences of climate change on international peace and security are profound. They can provoke conflicts or aggravate existing ones.

During my visit to several West African countries earlier this month, I could see the effects of climate change with my own eyes. The Sahel region, for example, is warming faster than the global average. Switzerland has just adopted its first foreign policy strategy for sub-Saharan Africa. Our country thus confirms the growing importance of the African continent, in all its diversity. The consequences of climate change make us want to strengthen the resilience of the population. In West Africa — as in the Middle East and Central Asia — we further promote, for example, the Blue Peace initiative. Good joint management of water resources reduces tensions and promotes stable relations among States. We therefore call on the Security Council to strengthen its efforts in the following three areas.

The first is conflict prevention. The implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is a priority. We welcome the fact that all members of the Council are parties to that agreement. We must achieve carbon neutrality. Our Government has set this objective for 2050.

Secondly, the Council should integrate climate-change risks into its decisions, including the mandates of peace missions. As Chair of the Group of Friends of the Protection of Civilians, Switzerland calls on the Council and Member States to strengthen the protection of the population, including in conflicts caused by climate risks. Together with its partners, Switzerland published, in New York, the results of a digital project to visualize the links between climate change and conflict in West Africa. This type of scientific innovation can better guide the Council's action.

Thirdly, with regard to the integration of recommendations from other United Nations bodies, stakeholders and civil society, the Peacebuilding Commission plays an important advisory role. Switzerland is proud to promote dialogues among actors, particularly in Geneva. I am thinking here of the Geneva Peace Week and any initiative that integrates environmental and climate issues into peace projects, and vice versa.

Switzerland is active in all three areas to mitigate the risks associated with climate change. And we would also do so as a member of the Security Council, for which our country is a candidate for the very first time.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome the opportunity to provide this video statement, which enables the direct participation of States not members of the Security Council in these times of the pandemic. Switzerland calls on the Council to continue this practice and is committed to improving the Council's working methods.

Annex 61

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations, Samuelu Laloni

It is a great honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 member States of the Pacific Islands Forum with a presence at the United Nations, namely, Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, Tuvalu.

We would like to express our appreciation to the President of the Security Council for convening this important debate on climate and security. While the world faces challenges brought about by the coronavirus disease pandemic, our climate continues to be in crisis, and one can only foresee the outcome — which, if not resolved, is increased risk of conflict and insecurity. Unlike many nations of the world, our Blue Continent is home to many populations living on atolls and low-lying coastlines barely a few meters above sea level. These populations do not have the luxury of space and time to deal with what is an existential threat to their survival.

The adverse impacts of climate change intersect with a complex array of environmental, economic and social issues, becoming a threat multiplier that can be a significant contributor to social and political instability, violence, conflict and a threat to the survivability of many island dwellers. We are here to collectively address the Security Council today because climate change first poses an existential threat to small island nations, and we would like to highlight the links between climate and security in our region, which are indivisible and demonstrable.

On behalf of our group, I would like to briefly discuss four climate-related security concerns we face, especially in the Pacific island nations, namely, displacement, food security, health and economic concerns.

Climate disaster displacement is already under way in our region and we, especially the smallest island countries, need comprehensive adaptation and mitigation support. The Pacific region is home to many atoll and low-lying coastal populations who are at heightened risk of losing their homes due to natural disasters and climate-related events. In this regard, we welcome the work of the International Law Commission on sea-level rise in relation to international law.

Both mitigation and adaptation to climate change are recognized as a critical part of climate action in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We should commit to taking substantial action on both, and we will need help from our partners accordingly. We call on the international community to meet or exceed its obligations and timelines as set out under the Paris Agreement and deliver more ambitious climate action, including by communicating or updating ambitious nationally determined contributions. It is crucial that we maintain the global momentum created by the Paris Agreement to ensure it is anchored firmly to its objectives and principles and is effectively implemented. We welcome the United States re-joining the Agreement.

Also, the potential for conflicts arising from forced displacement by rising sea levels, compounded by a warming climate, is a real and serious threat that the Security Council cannot afford to turn a blind eye to. In some of our members — such as, for instance, in Papua New Guinea's Carteret Islands — the relocation of affected communities continues to face challenges of resentment by host communities given the land tenure system, where most land is customarily owned. This is a trigger for possible conflicts to peace and security.

This cannot be relegated to the confines of a specific locality, as some Council members continue to claim. It must be seen more broadly and objectively from the

lens provided by the Charter of the United Nations in Article 1, paragraph 1, in the context of preventive security for international peace and security.

We see at first hand the impacts and implications of the climate change crisis facing our Pacific island nations and the dire consequences of sea-level rise, ocean warming, the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as storm surges and tropical cyclones, more variable rainfall patterns and prolonged droughts. Furthermore, the warming ocean leads to a change in the migratory patterns of fish, depriving many of us of one of our most basic food staples and income.

These impacts have had a negative effect on our already vulnerable food supply in the Pacific. The effects of climate change are expected to reduce the total tuna catch within our combined Economic Exclusion Zone, directly impacting the economic contributions from this industry, which has sustained much of our Government revenues over the years.

We must emphasize that food security is a crucial issue in our region, and action must be taken in addressing challenges such as the increase in food prices and poor nutrition, made worse by climate change.

In addition, the island population of the Pacific has limited capacity for agricultural production, making our food supply vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Taking my own country, Tuvalu, as an example, we are composed of atolls with porous, sandy soils and have limited potential for crop agriculture. Furthermore, we heavily rely on imported fuel and materials. Any decline in food production increases our reliance on importing food and other essentials.

Climate change exacerbates health security risks, particularly through increased vector-borne and water-borne diseases, heat-related illnesses, food security impacting non-communicable diseases, mental health issues, injury associated with disasters and extreme weather events, and disruption to health services.

We are continually working on improving the health status of our people, and this cannot be done if we are not able to manage climate change and its adverse impacts. We therefore urge all our friends to take steps to combat climate change and to help us in advancing core public and environmental health functions and to build a thorough health system. It is our common goal to save lives and our shared home.

Economic growth is necessary in the Pacific not for pursuing wealth but for maintaining our basic needs. Because of our unique geography, the limitations of our domestic market leave international trade inseparable from our prosperity. In this regard, we heavily rely on imported goods. However, our region's economic situation is continually undermined by the cost and the adverse impacts of climate change.

A large part of the Pacific economy depends on agriculture, fisheries and tourism, which have helped us develop in past decades. However, climate change has had a significant negative impact on all central elements of our economy. Rainfall patterns have been altered due to climate change and have decreased arable land, resulting in loss of agricultural production. Our ocean is also affected by changes in wind, wave and ocean currents, affecting the distribution of marine fish catches.

In addition, many members of our region have enjoyed the fruits of tourism in past years. Increasing sea temperatures and acidification have already affected coral reefs, and marine life in general. Coral reefs and marine creatures are especially important not only because they serve the diversity of the ecosystem but also as the main attractions in our region. We therefore urge immediate collaboration for mutual prosperity in the Pacific.

The unique vulnerabilities of Pacific island nations require special attention. It is clear that the most climate-vulnerable members of our societies require focus

and support from government and the international community to promote resilience and to adapt to the security challenges posed by climate change.

The international community and the United Nations, including the Security Council, must recognize climate change as a unique and consequential threat multiplier in all relevant work and activities. We request the Secretary-General to appoint a special adviser on climate change and security. Furthermore, we call on the Security Council to appoint a special rapporteur to produce a regular review of global, regional and national security threats caused by climate change. The Security Council can, and should, add its weight to calls to ensure that the global response is able to address these risks.

Annex 62

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations

Ukraine highly appreciates the initiative of the United Kingdom to hold this open debate and expresses its gratitude to the briefers for their presentations.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the Federal Foreign Minister of Germany on behalf of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security (annex 20).

Ukraine was among the founding members of the Group of Friends in 2018, as we consider climate change and its footprint on conflict to be a global challenge. We welcome the fact that this issue is gaining traction within the Security Council, as climate change becomes one of the most dangerous triggers of fragility and instability.

Climate-impacted societies find themselves in a particularly vulnerable position. They suffer from sea-level rise, floods, droughts and intensified natural disasters that can lead to agricultural failures and economic insecurity, resource scarcity, forced displacement and, finally, to undermining peace.

We agree with the Secretary General, who stated at the recent Munich Security Conference segment on priorities for global action that “climate catastrophe is looming”. Adequate answers should be found to these challenges, common to most of the globe, with small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries being among the most disproportionately affected.

It is also impossible to cope with climate change without addressing its gender aspects. Women and girls are at higher risk and carry greater burdens of the climate change impact, particularly during conflicts, pandemics and natural disasters.

Earlier this month, in collaboration with a cross-regional group of United Nations States Members, international institutions and civil society, Ukraine convened a side-event on women’s rights and environmental sustainability. There was a joint call by the participants to ensure full access for women to the decision-making process, which would be beneficial for all stages of climate-related policies, from planning to policymaking and implementation.

Ukraine readily joined another side-event, organized last week by Germany, Switzerland and the Niger, which touched upon climate stress and insecurity in West Africa. It also highlighted the high-level attention among the majority of Member States to the climate change-security nexus.

Ukraine has engaged in seeking climate change solutions not as an impartial spectator. Just last year, prolonged droughts destroyed crops in a number of Ukrainian regions. There were devastating floods in the west and large-scale forest fires in the east of the country, including in the immediate vicinity of the contact line in Donbas. The Russian occupation formations considered those fires as a factor conducive to their hostile activities, thus hindering Ukraine’s fire-fighting operations.

There is another matter of particular concern, namely, that there is a flood danger to the site of an underground nuclear test carried out in 1979 in the Yunkom coal mine, near the occupied city of Yenakiyeve in Donbas. This presents the real risk of radioactive contamination of groundwaters, rivers and, ultimately, the Sea of Azov.

We have also observed signs of severe environmental degradation in temporarily occupied Crimea, caused by environmental mismanagement of both natural and agricultural areas.

Ukraine contributes to the global climate efforts and believes that the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, should be an important benchmark. As President Zelenskyy announced last December at the International Climate Ambition Summit, Ukraine is engaged in its second nationally determined contribution. We set a 2030 target for greenhouse-gas emissions for all sectors of Ukraine's economy to be within the range of 36 to 42 per cent as compared to 1990 levels, which means a reduction of 58 to 64 per cent.

Ukraine's long-term goal is to achieve carbon neutrality. We will make every effort to minimize the time to achieve this goal. Enhanced international efforts to support Ukraine in restoring our sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders would be instrumental to this end.

Annex 63

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations

Climate change is the defining issue of our time, and the United Arab Emirates commends the United Kingdom for its continued leadership on climate action and for keeping this issue central on the Security Council's agenda.

Almost five years since signing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, our efforts to keep global warming in check are facing many challenges. Environmental crises are worsening, and temperatures around the globe continue reaching records each year. Droughts, tsunamis and floods, among other climate-induced disasters, are negatively impacting health, food availability, housing and, ultimately, the safety of millions of people across the globe. These trends have a ripple effect, potentially driving migration patterns and conflicts due to scarcity of resources.

There is a growing recognition by the international community of the impact of climate change as a contributing factor to conflict and instability. But mere recognition is no longer enough. It is time for the Security Council to identify actionable areas where it can contribute to alleviating the negative impact of climate change on global stability and security. The United Arab Emirates would like to outline four recommendations in this regard.

First, United Nations peacekeeping operations should shift towards increased reliance on renewable and sustainable energy in carrying out Security Council mandates. It is important for the United Nations to set an example and not exacerbate worsening environmental conditions. The United Arab Emirates commends the leadership of the Secretariat in committing to 80 per cent renewable energy usage by 2030, notably through the second phase of the Department of Operational Support's Environment Strategy for Field Missions. But hitting this target will not be feasible without ramping up the use of renewables in peacekeeping missions that constitute the lion's share of energy use by the United Nations.

Secondly, climate change generates particular security risks for women and girls. But in order for us to better understand the specific impact it has on women and girls, the United Arab Emirates believes it is crucial for the United Nations and Member States to ensure that climate-risk analysis be gender-sensitive. An early awareness of the crucial role of women in peacekeeping has been one of the drivers for the United Arab Emirates in pursuing its women and peace and security training programme for women peacekeepers through the Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Women and Peace and Security Initiative, developed in partnership with UN-Women. Mainstreaming women's perspectives in all aspects of peace and security remains a key priority for the United Arab Emirates.

Thirdly, climate change-induced hardships in vulnerable countries need to be considered as security risks and should be prioritized by the international community. Small island developing States as well as many least developed countries are on the front lines in the fight against climate change. Addressing hardships caused by climate change, particularly as part of peacekeeping efforts, is essential in successfully carrying out Security Council mandates.

Fourthly, scientific models using geospatial imaging and other cutting-edge technologies are already being used to predict where climate disasters are likely to occur. The renewal of the mandates of peacekeeping and special political missions should be informed by such forecasts. This would allow the Council to truly move from reactive measures to proactive measures. Additionally, we encourage peacekeeping operations, as appropriate, to assist host Governments, and the United

Nations system to undertake risk-assessments and risk-management strategies related to climate change.

Taking action against climate-related risks to international peace and security will require bold, innovative thinking by the Council. We are encouraged by the fact that a growing number of Council members acknowledge the intersection of climate change and international peace and security. During its term on the Council in 2022 and 2023, the United Arab Emirates will be committed to advocating for practical and actionable steps the Council can adopt to address the impacts of climate change on international peace and security.
